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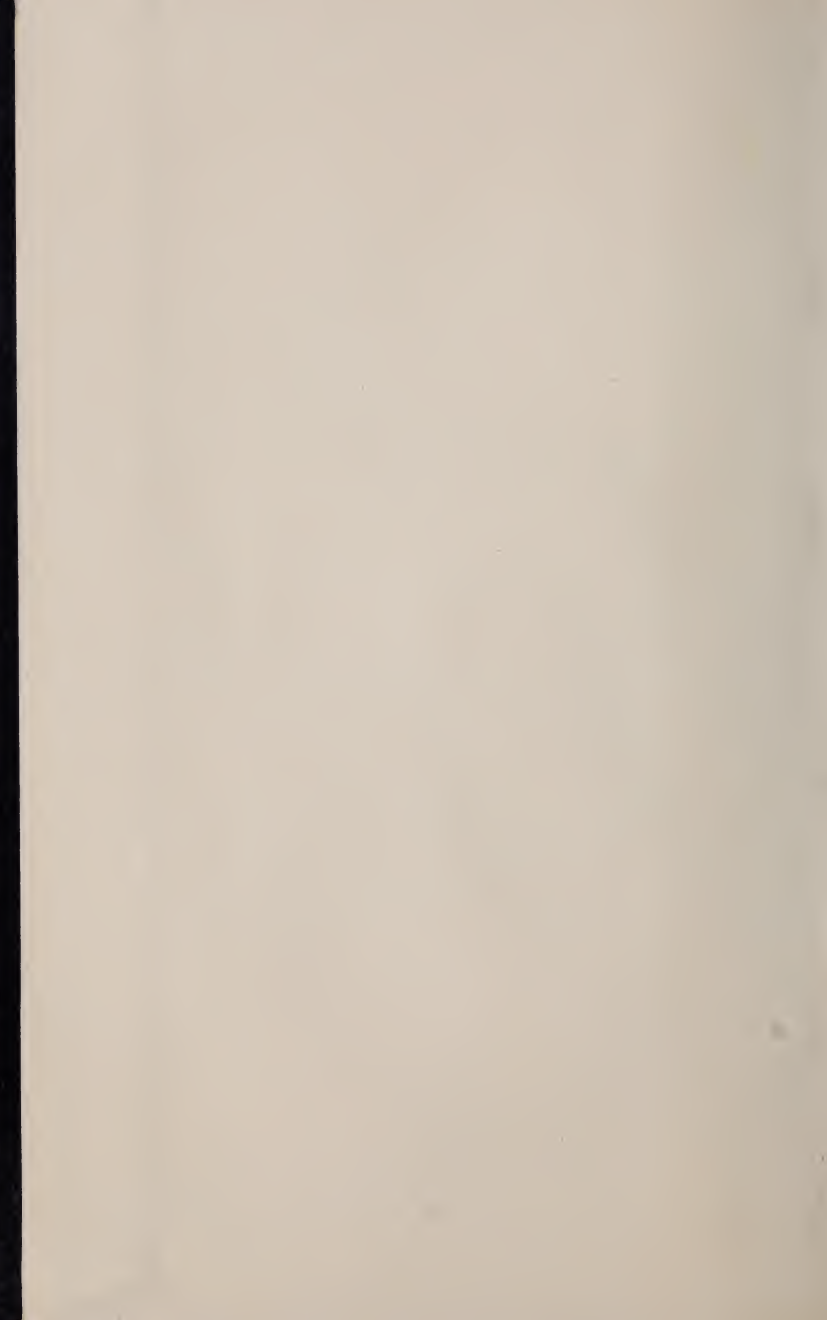
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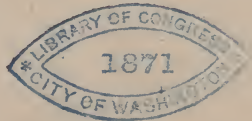
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PARLOR LECTURES

ON

THE NEW TESTAMENT.



BY THE AUTHOR OF PARLOR LECTURES ON
SCRIPTURE HISTORY.



AUGUSTA, ME.

PUBLISHED BY BRINSMADE & DOLE :

AT THE DEPOSITORY OF KENNEBEC CO. S. S. UNION.

1832.

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LECTURES upon the New Testament are now offered to the public. Whether they will answer the end for which they were designed, time must determine.

The many simultaneous efforts at *conversations*, is proof, that this form of instruction approves itself to the friends of Sabbath Schools. It must be perfectly obvious to all, that it gives opportunity for variety, and enables a writer with ease to call to her assistance collateral subjects.

The simple purpose of the writer of these dialogues, was to give a connected story of the Bible, accompanied with such moral reflections and such literary remarks, as the subject invited. Many ancient usages have been explained, while such information has been given of a geographical and historical nature, as the subject seemed to require.

Her first object has been to *reach the heart*, and if this purpose is accomplished but in a solitary instance, she will feel that her reward is great.

KENNEBEC COUNTY, MAINE, APRIL, 1831.

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PARLOR LECTURES

ON THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

LECTURE I.

Introductory Remarks—Birth of John the Baptist—and of Christ.

THE children of many a sabbath school are doubtless acquainted with the Lectures upon the history of the Old Testament; and they remember, I dare say, that William and Herbert Lyman heard the story of the bible from their kind mother.

A year or two after these instructions were given, William was sent to a pious, respectable printer in Philadelphia to learn the trade, and Herbert, feeling very lonely after his brother's departure, asked his mother to go through with the New Testament, in the same manner she had formerly gone through with the history of the Old. To this she readily consented.

You remember, my son, said Mrs. Lyman, that the Jews inhabited the western part of Asia, and that Jerusalem was the capital of Judea, their country. At the time when this history commences, the Jews were under the dominion of the Romans; Augustus Cæsar was emperor of Rome, and under him, Herod was king of Judea.

Herbert. How old was the world at this time?

Mother. About four thousand years. Those who were learned in the scriptures of the Old Testament, now looked for the promised Messiah, clearly foretold by the prophets, and constantly referred to by the sacrifices and offerings under the Jewish law. But the ideas of the Hebrews were dark and imperfect. They had formerly found, in those who were raised up to assist them, deliverers from the enemies by whom they were oppressed.

Herbert. I don't recollect who, mother.

Mother. Moses delivered them from Egyptian bondage. Joshua assisted them to drive out the heathen from the land of Canaan.

Herbert. O yes, and Samson and Deborah in the time of the Judges.

Mother. Saul at the commencement of the monarchy was such a deliverer, and others might be mentioned, though these instances will enable us to understand why the Jews so confidently expected one to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. Accordingly when the birth of Jesus Christ was made known, when the Savior of sinners was announced as the son of Mary, few were prepared to receive him as the promised Messiah.

It had been foretold that one should be sent in the spirit and power of Elias, as the forerunner of Christ. When John the baptist appeared, this prophecy was fulfilled.

Herbert. Was John a Hebrew?

Mother. Yes, and his mother, who was a descendant of Aaron the priest, was cousin to the virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. Zacharias, father of John was a priest. He, as well as his wife Elizabeth, was very pious, and walked in all the ordinances and statutes of the Lord blameless. But they had no children, and this, at a time when all expected the Savior, was a great trial;

for all the pious, who hoped in him, had strong desires that he might be born in their families. As Zacharias was burning incense in the temple, Gabriel, an angel from God, stood by the altar, and told him that he should have a son. Zacharias doubted whether God intended to grant him so great a blessing, and required of the angel a sign.

Herbert. What did he mean by that?

Mother. He wanted proof that what the angel said was true. This proof was granted, but it carried within it a punishment for his unbelief. For the angel said to him, Thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be performed in their season. When Zacharias came out of the temple, the people knew from his appearance that he had seen a vision.

In due time, the promise made to Zacharias was fulfilled. God gave him a son; and upon the eighth day, when they went to circumcise the child, and give it a name, the friends and relatives present wished that he might be named for his father. Then Zacharias called for a writing desk, and having written,—*His name is John*,—his mouth was opened. The promise had been kept, and no farther sign was needed between Zacharias and the angel.

Herbert. What did he say, mother, when he found he could talk?

Mother. He praised God. Very likely the pious Zacharias had a clear view of John as the one who was to appear on earth before the promised Savior, for he offered praises, in which we should devoutly join. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David.

Herbert. What did he say to his little babe, mother?

Mother. Thou, child, shalt be called a prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. Zacharias's heart seemed filled with the Spirit of God, and it is said of his son that he grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert until the day of his showing unto Israel.

At this time, Augustus, the Roman emperor, wished to know the extent of his dominions, and the ability of his subjects to pay him money as a tax. He therefore ordered that all should go to their own city to be taxed, and have their names, with those of their wives and children enrolled; likewise to have the trade or occupation of each one registered, that the state of the empire might be well understood.

Herbert. To their own city? Does that mean where they were born?

Mother. I presume it does. Obedient to this edict, Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, where prophecy had expressly said, that Christ should be born. Herbert, where is Bethlehem?

Herbert. South of Jerusalem, the capital of Judea.

Mother. Mary and Joseph, though descendants of David the king, were poor; and as this was a time, when people of wealth crowded the city of Bethlehem, who were able to pay for their accommodations, they were doubtless attended to. But Joseph and Mary had only a stable; and when our Savior was born, his mother had no place to lay him, but a manger.

Herbert. Mother, was there ever any one else so poor as to lay their little babe in a manger? I never heard of such a thing.

Mother. No, Herbert, I presume the King of kings alone was so received. When the son of Napoleon Bo-

naparte was born, hundreds of dollars were expended upon a cradle of the most elegant workmanship. Some such thing has always been thought necessary by those, who rank high in society. By refusing earthly distinctions, our Savior has effectually shown how trifling they are.

Herbert. Our Savior had no need of any earthly honors.

Mother. No, dear, for he had those, which no earthly prince could ever claim. Angels now saw the mystery unfolded, which they desired to look into, and they brought the glad tidings of a Savior to a company of shepherds, and a multitude of the heavenly host sang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will towards men.

After the appearance of the angels, the shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem; and when they saw the babe; they made known the saying which was told them concerning the child, and they returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told to them.

On the eighth day the babe was circumcised. His name was called Jesus; a name given him because he came to save us from our sins. The virgin Mary was obedient to all the commands of the Jewish law, because Christ was born under the law,—that is, while it was still in force. Accordingly she appeared in the temple at Jerusalem to present her infant before the Lord, and make the offering that the law required on the birth of a child.

Herbert. What was the offering, mother?

Mother. A lamb for those who could afford it, but Joseph and Mary were able to bring only a pair of turtle doves.

Herbert. They must have been very poor, mother.

Mother. From the time of Malachi through nearly four hundred years there had no prophet arisen among the Hebrews. At this period God raised up Simeon, who, by the immediate spirit of the Lord, knew that he should not die without seeing the promised Messiah.

Herbert. To what tribe did Simeon belong, mother?

Mother. I do not know; nothing is said of him except what is recorded in the second chapter of Luke. He was a pious man, and wished exceedingly to have the Jews prosper; or, as it is expressed in the scriptures, he was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And he came by the Spirit into the temple when the parents brought the child Jesus to do for him after the custom of the law. Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the eyes of all the people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Herbert. Mother, was there not something said about Anna, a prophetess?

Mother. Yes, dear; she also was there, and gave thanks to God, and spake of this babe to all who looked for redemption in Israel.

Herbert. And did the scribes and priests believe that Christ had really come?

Mother. No, they remained ignorant of it till sometime after this. Probably they were not searching the scriptures with that prayerful attention, that they ought; and God does not bestow upon his careless, inactive children, the rewards of diligence. But it was otherwise with Anna, who was a very pious woman of the tribe of Asher.

She lost her husband when she was very young, and after that event had lived near the temple, that she might attend upon all its ordinances.

Herbert. Attend on its ordinances means, I suppose, that she might be there to worship God at all the sacrifices.

Mother. Yes, for she probably spent all her time in the service of God, and doubtless added private fastings and prayers to her public devotions. Happy woman! How must she have felt repaid for all her anxious waiting, when her eyes were allowed to see the Expectation of Israel; for doubtless she believed in him to the saving of her soul. We, Herbert, are as much bound to believe in Christ as Anna was, and as great joy would follow our being devoted to the cause of religion as filled the bosom of this pious woman. But we will rest if you please.



LECTURE II.

Wise men visit the Savior—Cruelty of Herod—Childhood of the Savior.

AFTER the offerings of Joseph and Mary in the Temple, and the acknowledgement of Christ by Simeon and Anna, more open homage was paid to the infant King. Wise men from the east came to inquire for the promised Messiah.

Herbert. From the east? Where does that mean, mother?

Mother. From countries east of Judea, perhaps Persia. Their first inquiries appear to have been made at Jerusalem, though the mother of Jesus is thought to have lived at this time in Bethlehem. The inquiry of the wise men was,—Where is he, who is born king of the Jews,

for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.

Herbert. But how should they know that this star was to direct them to Christ?

Mother. Probably God made it plain to them, perhaps by a dream; for you know he instructed his people by dreams in the early ages of the world, before the bible was written.

Herbert. Yes, mother, I know he did the Jews, but God's people did not live in Persia.

Mother. True, my son, but at the time of Christ's coming, all, who were not Jews, were called Gentiles; and under the christian dispensation, Jews and Gentiles were to become one in Christ;—that is, if they would believe in Christ and love him, they should all be accepted. Jewish laws, and Jewish worship were to be put away, and this was early proof that salvation through Christ is free to all men.

Herbert. Do you understand, mother, why God called Abraham, and set apart a people, who were to keep from other nations, and be so distinct?

Mother. That they might be holy. They were a peculiar people, and though full of imperfections, more holy than any then upon earth. From Abram Christ was to be born.

Herbert. That is I suppose, Abram's son Isaac was to have a son Jacob, and he another son, and so on till Christ should come.

Mother. Yes, just so. Knowing these names distinctly was called understanding the genealogy of a person. The genealogy of Christ is given by Matthew through Joseph, who was *called* his father; but Luke traces back the genealogy of Mary to Adam. Yet as it was custom-

ary to put the name of the husband rather than of the wife in public registers, the Messiah is called the son of Joseph. But in my explanations I have wandered from the wise men of the east. These men made known the object of their journey to Herod the king.

Herbert. Was Herod pleased, mother?

Mother. No, dear, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Herbert. Why troubled?

Mother. Herod, hearing of a king, supposed one had come to take the royal honors from his family. And this with so cruel and ambitious a monarch would be a sufficient reason why he should feel anxious: and as his anxiety was generally followed with cruelty, the whole of Jerusalem was in agitation. Then Herod called together the chief priests and scribes, and demanded of them where Christ should be born. And having learnt that the prophet had said Christ should be born in Bethlehem, Herod directed the wise men to go and search diligently; and when they found the young child, to bring him word, that he might worship him also.

Herbert. Did Herod really desire to worship the Savior?

Mother. No, dear, he only wished to destroy him; for he seems to have been convinced that such a Savior was promised to the Jews, and that the time for his appearing had arrived. But he must have been very ignorant of the character of God, if he thought that the Messiah, so long foretold, and on whom depended the salvation of all men, could be harmed, before he had accomplished the work, for which he left the glories of heaven, and took the form of a man.

Herbert. Did the wise men go to Bethlehem?

Mother. Yes, and when they departed, the star, which they saw in the east, guided them to the house, where Joseph and Mary lived. These travellers, who had taken a long and expensive journey, must no doubt have rejoiced very much, when they found they had at last reached the place, where they were to behold the babe of Bethlehem.

Herbert. Dont you suppose they were disappointed, when they saw how poor Joseph and Mary were, and how humble were all their accommodations.

Mother. Possibly they might have been, though we are told they were wise men, and of course they would think less of splendor than men of weaker minds. We, however, are not told that they appeared surprised; and when they saw the child, they worshipped him, and presented gold, frankincense and myrrh. These very valuable presents they would not have offered, had they not felt assured that Jesus was indeed the Christ.

Herbert. Isn't it strange that these people should have travelled so far, and had their hearts interested in the Messiah, when the chief priests disregarded his coming?

Mother. Yes, Herbert, it is truly surprising, that when the prophesies were so exactly fulfilled, so few understood the signs of the times.

Herbert. The wise men did not go back to Herod, I think.

Mother. No, being warned of God, they returned another way. After this, the angel of the Lord directed Joseph to flee into Egypt; which you know is in Africa.

Herbert. For what reason, mother?

Mother. To be out of the reach of Herod. He troubled the church of God but a short time; but he lived long enough to exhibit an instance of great cruelty in Judea.

Herbert. What was it, mother?

Mother. Fearful that the babe of Bethlehem would inherit the honors he possessed, he determined to destroy him.

Herbert. Was Herod kind to his own family?

Mother. No, dear, Herod was a tyrant. He had reigned about thirty-five years, but had in all that time proved himself a cruel, blood-thirsty man. He put to death his wife and two of his sons. You will not wonder after this to hear, that he sent out and slew all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time he had diligently inquired of the wise men. This, Herbert, is an example of ambition, unchecked by principle. That is, he desired to be great; and as he did not fear God, he cared not what means he took to accomplish his purpose.

Herbert. If Joseph and Mary were so poor, how could they bear the expense of such a journey?

Mother. The offerings of the wise men of the east were, you recollect, very valuable. These probably supplied them with means to take the journey, and would also furnish a support for them while they were there.

Herbert. What is said of them while they were in Egypt?

Mother. Not any thing, my son. The next that we know of the infant is, that Joseph and Mary were warned by a dream to return to their own country, and assured that those were dead, who sought the young child's life.

Herbert. Did Joseph return then, mother?

Mother. Not to Bethlehem, my dear, but to Nazareth, in the province of Galilee. Which way was that from Bethlehem?

Herbert. North west.

Mother. Through the childhood of our Savior, we may suppose he said many things, which it would be highly gratifying to us to know. But this period of his life is passed over, and we hear nothing of him until he is twelve years old.

Herbert. What is said then, mother?

Mother. We are told that he went with his parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover. When this sacred feast was over, Joseph and Mary left Jerusalem to return to their home. It was customary for those who kept the passover at this city, to go there in companies, that they might enjoy each other's society, and afford assistance, if necessary. Joseph and Mary had travelled a day in this manner, without the child Jesus.

Herbert. Did they mean to leave him, mother?

Mother. Oh no. They supposed that he was with them. They had friends and relations in the company, and probably thought the child was conversing with them; but when night overtook them, they sought for him, and found he was not in the company.

Herbert. Was not his mother very anxious about him?

Mother. Yes, and they returned immediately to Jerusalem, where they inquired two days in vain for him. On the third day they went to the temple; and there, probably in one of the chambers of that magnificent building, they found him conversing with those, who were learned in the Jewish law, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

Jesus Christ, when he condescended to pass through childhood and infancy, left a pattern, which all may follow. True, there is little said of him at this early age, but what is here recorded is well worth remembering. He *heard* those who were older give their opinions, and

he asked them questions, and thus set a pattern of modesty to the young. We are told that he returned to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents. Here is the Son of God honoring his earthly parents, and thus obeying the command of his Father in heaven. Herbert, we should pray to be made like Jesus Christ, and children should be very anxious to profit by the example he set them, when he stooped so low as to be himself a little child.

Herbert. Mother, what became of the babe that was given to Zacharias and Elizabeth?

Mother. He lived a retired life, in his childhood, and even till he entered on his public ministry which was at about the age of thirty.

Herbert. Was he a minister, mother?

Mother. Yes, dear. He preached every where, that men should repent, and Herbert, the same doctrine must be preached now. We have no way of escape from misery, but to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, even upon him, who was once an infant in the manger. But I should tell you something more of John the baptist, and of the state of the Roman empire. About the time of the passover, when Christ conversed with the doctors in the temple, Augustus Cæsar, the emperor of Rome, died, and was succeeded by Tiberius Cæsar.

Herbert. Mother, was Cæsar a name?

Mother. It was a name with the first five of the Cæsars; after that a name common to the Roman emperors, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt. The affairs relating to the religion of the Jews were at this time in an irregular and disordered state. The sacred office of the high priest was disposed of as their rulers pleased, without regard to the laws of the Jews. The way was now preparing for the accomplishment of one of the prophecies.

Herbert. What was it, mother?

Mother. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet, until Shiloh (or Christ) come. Shiloh had now come, and their laws and government were soon to have an end.

Meanwhile much was to be accomplished, and John came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Herbert. What did he mean, mother?

Mother. He meant the kingdom of the Messiah.

Herbert. Did the Jews understand about this kingdom?

Mother. No, they had very imperfect views of it, as I have before remarked, and were constantly looking for an earthly monarch.

Herbert. Was John very pious, mother?

Mother. Yes, it is said he was filled with the Holy Spirit. He had lived in retirement, and is described as paying little attention to his food or dress. He was clothed in a coarse garment of camel's hair, with an undressed piece of leather about him; and his food was the locusts of the country, which are still eaten.

Herbert. Eat locusts, mother? What do they taste like?

Mother. When fried they are said to taste like a fish.

Herbert. Do they fry them? I thought they were only little mites of things.

Mother. Brown, in his dictionary of the bible, speaks of them as having been found a span, or nearly eleven inches long, though this is not common. Yes, they were cooked and eaten with honey, which was found wild in great abundance, in that region. And this was the simple fare of John the baptist. But I think you must be fatigued by this time, and I will detain you no longer.

LECTURE III.

Preaching of John the baptist—Baptism of Christ—Marriage at Cana—
Christ purifies the temple.

AFTER Herbert had heard his mother relate the story of our Savior's birth, and the coming of John the baptist to prepare the way, he was very anxious to understand the truths of the bible. He read this holy book a great deal, and he used to kneel down and pray that God would help him understand it, and give him a knowledge of himself. Mother, said he, as he seated himself to receive instruction, what is the meaning of this passage: The voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.

Mother. You have often seen men make a road, Herbert, and know that the ground is rough and uneven till it is worked upon.

Herbert. Yes, mother.

Mother. By the rough and uneven road the character of the Jewish people was represented. They had few correct ideas respecting Christ, or his appearance upon earth. They were proud, and had strong desires for temporal good, and thought that the Messiah, when he came, would build up Jerusalem till it should be a larger place than Rome, which was then mistress of the world. These were wrong feelings, and were to be brought low, or *put down*, that the path might be made straight. John the baptist explained the design of Christ's coming, and preached to them upon the necessity of repentance, and the importance of their having hearts fitted to receive Jesus Christ as the promised Savior of fallen man.

Herbert. Was the ambition, which the Jews had to be great, their only sin, mother?

Mother. O no; they had many sins, and John continually preached to them the necessity of being purified from them. The Jews had been accustomed to many washings, and outward purifications, as a sign of inward purity, or of a heart prepared to love and serve God. And when they repented, and forsook their sins, they were baptised of John.

Herbert. Were the people pleased with the preaching of John?

Mother. Yes; it is said that Jerusalem and all Judea, and the region round about Jordan went out to him.

Herbert. I should not have thought they would have liked him so well, if he preached about their sins.

Mother. Undoubtedly the Spirit of God was poured out upon them, or they would have turned away from the truth. But they listened to him while he preached to them not only the necessity of repentance, but of bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, or living holy lives. For we have no reason to think any one a christian, who does not live in obedience to God's commands.

Herbert. Did John tell them much about our Savior?

Mother. Yes, he spoke much of him. He that cometh after me, said he, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. While John was thus exalting the Savior, and proclaiming his own unworthiness, the blessed Jesus came to be baptized of him.

Herbert. Why should our Savior be baptized? He and no sin to repent of.

Mother. No, dear, but others had, and for their sakes he would honor the baptism of John. He, however, knew

something of the greatness of the Son of God, and modestly replied, I have need to be baptized of thee ; and comest thou to me? But when he found our Savior chose it, he baptized him. As he came up from the water, the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and rested upon him; and a voice from heaven was heard, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Herbert. Mother, what did this mean? were there any people present to hear the voice, and see the dove?

Mother. It does not *appear* that any one but John witnessed the scene. But you remember that Jesus Christ stooped so low as to take the form of a man. This token was given of his possessing the influence of the Holy Spirit without measure.

Herbert. Was it really a dove that rested upon Christ?

Mother. Probably the word is used to express the light, waving manner, in which the appearance came down from heaven. I don't know that we have reason to suppose it otherwise resembled a dove. But this, my son, is of little consequence. We should not be very anxious about mere questions of curiosity, but rather strive more perfectly to understand such as will instruct us in our duty to God and to our fellow men.

What is next said of Jesus Christ, asked Herbert, in that thoughtful manner, that showed he was not willing to take the name of the Lord in vain, while his mother, pleased to have him desire a knowledge of the scriptures, told him of our Savior's temptations.

Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness ; and there, after having fasted forty days, he endured the temptations of Satan. But Jesus was not to be induced to do evil, and Satan departed from him. About this time our

Savior entered on his public ministry, having spent the greater part of his life in retirement.

Herbert. How old was he at this time, mother?

Mother. He is thought to have been about thirty.—Meanwhile John the baptist continued to bear testimony in favor of Jesus Christ, and while he publicly acknowledged our Lord superior to himself, the chief priests, and scribes, and the great council of the nation, came to inquire into the reasons of his conduct.

Herbert. Did they, mother? What did they say?

Mother. They asked him why he baptized if he was not Christ, nor Elias.

Herbert. Elias? What did he mean by that?

Mother. The Jews expected Elias, or Elijah to come personally from heaven, before Christ appeared, and did not understand that they were only to look for one with the same holy and devoted spirit.

Herbert. What answer did John give?

Mother. He told them that he baptized with water as an outward sign of the blessings that were to be bestowed on them by the Messiah. This conversation is thought to have taken place, when Christ was in the wilderness, and the next day, when John saw him coming, he pointed him out to the multitude as the Lamb of God, who had come to take away the sin of the world. He also told the people of the wonderful manner in which he had been led to know that he was the Messiah; for God had pointed him out to John, by the resting of the Holy Spirit upon him.

Herbert. What, did not John know the Savior?

Mother. No, dear, they had both lived in retirement, at a distance from each other, and probably, though John

well understood the character of the Messiah, he did not know his person.

Not far from the time of which we have been speaking, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus at this time had collected a few disciples, who believed in him, and were desirous of following him, that they might hear his conversation, and be instructed by him. Their divine Master condescended to be present, and they were also of the party. Nothing is said of Joseph, the husband of Mary; perhaps he was dead. The wedding was probably celebrated in a poor family, for there was a want of wine, which, when the mother of Jesus knew, she told her son.

Herbert. Why did she tell him?

Mother. She undoubtedly knew that he had power, if he thought proper, to supply their wants.

Herbert. What did he say to her, mother?

Mother. Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.

Herbert. Woman! Was our Savior displeased?

Mother. Woman was used as an expression of respect. In that age even servants spoke in that manner to the most noble women.

Herbert. He did as she requested, I believe.

Mother. Yes, though perhaps it was wrong for her to have interfered. It was customary in all Jewish families to have water standing in their houses for purification. In this house where the guests were assembled, there were six water pots, containing two or three firkins apiece.

Herbert. How much was a firkin?

Mother. A little less than a gallon. Jesus said to them, Fill the water pots with water; and they filled them up to the brim. And at his command, they drew the

water, and found that it had been turned by a miracle to wine. This is the first of our Savior's miracles.

Herbert. Where is the spot, in which it was performed?

Mother. It is in the eastern part of Galilee.

Herbert. Why was it called Cana of Galilee, mother?

Mother. To distinguish it from another Cana, on the lot of Ephraim. How interesting is the character of the blessed Redeemer. We see him, who was so exalted, condescending to partake of the enjoyments of those around him. As I proceed in the history of Jesus Christ, there is nothing affects me so much as his meekness and condescension. Blessed pattern ! May God teach us that we be likeminded.

Herbert. Oh, mother, *can* we be like our Savior?

Mother. We can strive to be like him, my son; and children should think often that Jesus was subject to his parents, and was kind and attentive to the wants of those around him. As we advance in his history, you will see more and more to make you love the Savior, and fresh occasion to pray that God would make you like him.

Herbert. Where did our Savior go after he left Cana of Galilee?

Mother. To Capernaum, where he appears to have spent a few days with his mother, and his disciples, on a visit. From thence he went up to Jerusalem to keep the passover, which was drawing near. At this time there was much disorder in the preparations for the temple worship. And when our Savior entered the temple, he found there those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting. Seeing how the courts of this holy place were defiled, our Lord made a scourge of small cords, to drive out the buyers and sellers.

Herbert. Mother, did the people trade at the temple

as they would at a market? We should think it very strange to see sheep and oxen about our meeting house.

Mother. You will recollect, my dear, that the worship of the Jews was very different from that of the present day. It was necessary that beasts and birds should be brought to the temple, that they might be offered in sacrifice. But it is probable that the feelings of those, who were now present, were altogether wrong. Perhaps they wished to make money out of the transaction, and very likely were more desirous of serving themselves, than of serving God. Jesus Christ saw their hearts, and knew that they were worldly minded, and had little zeal for the honor of God. He was displeased with this spirit, and said to the people, Take these things hence. Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.

Herbert. Did the people obey him, mother?

Mother. Yes, they did, though he was not generally acknowledged as the promised Messiah. They were convinced, probably, from his manner, that he ought to be obeyed; and awed by the majesty of their divine Teacher into obedience and submission, they suffered themselves to be driven from this sacred place. We are here told that the Jews required a sign. Probably this request came from the rulers, priests and scribes.

Herbert. What did they mean by a sign, mother?

Mother. Some miracle, or some action that showed he had more power than other men.

Herbert. Did our Savior grant it?

Mother. He told them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up.

Herbert. What did he mean, mother?

Mother. That when his life should be taken away, he

had power to rise from the dead; which was indeed a sign worthy of the Messiah.

Herbert. Did the Jews understand him?

Mother. No, dear, they thought he had spoken of the temple, in which they worshipped; but when he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered the prophecy, and believed on his name.

Herbert. Why was not our Savior more open with them?

Mother. It is said that he knew what was in their hearts. He might have seen there a desire to make him their king, provided they should see evidence to satisfy them that he was the true Messiah. But he came not to seek great things for himself, of an earthly nature, for his kingdom was not of this world. Shall we rest, my son?



LECTURE IV.

Conversation with Nicodemus—Death of John the baptist—Christ converses with a woman of Samaria—Heals a nobleman's son—Visits Nazareth—Synagogue.

At this time our Savior was exciting great attention. The Jews, it is true, did not receive him as Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. But they considered him as an extraordinary person; and many of them, at this time, thought him a great prophet. Among these was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Wishing to understand more perfectly what Christ taught, he visited him.

Herbert. Yes, mother, and didn't he go by night?

Mother. Yes, he did. Probably he feared that some of the Jews might be disposed to blame, or ridicule him. Very likely he loved the praise of men.

Herbert. What did he say to our Savior?

Mother. He addressed him with great respect, and told him that he was convinced he was a teacher sent from God, or he could not have performed such miracles. Our Savior answered by declaring to him the most important of all truths, the necessity of having a new heart. But Nicodemus did not understand him. Then our Savior more fully explained the subject, and added, Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Herbert. And then, I suppose the Savior spoke not only of the Jews, but of all men, every where.

Mother. Yes, Herbert, no child, however young, can be happy after death, without having experienced the new birth. This all important change, I fear, you have not experienced, and you know not what a day may bring forth. My son, you have no where been told that you will tomorrow find a convenient place for repentance. All the exhortations of the bible speak of *to-day*; of the present as an accepted time.

I know it, mother, said Herbert with deep solemnity, but I don't know how to repent. I don't think I even understand what it is to be born again.

Mother. I will try, my dear son, to explain it;—mean while you must be lifting up your heart in prayer to God, that he may enable you to receive the truth in the love of it. You know, Herbert, that you do not love God. You have often neglected to pray to him. You have broken his sabbaths, not, it is true, by running about the fields, but by idle, sinful thoughts, and trifling conversation.

Herbert. Yes, and by reading books that were not serious, and proper for the day.

Mother. My son, if you have done that, you have also

to repent that you have not honored your parents, for they have often told you that this is wrong.

Oh yes, said Herbert, bursting into tears, how wicked I have been.

Mother. Now you see there is something in these things, that would necessarily make you unhappy in religious company.

Herbert. Yes, I see it.

Mother. Well, the new birth means having an entire change in your feelings, so that instead of the sabbath being a weariness, you would love it, and think it the "day of all the week the best." Instead of its being a burden to pray, you would love to draw near to God. Instead of seeking your chief good in worldly things, you would love to serve God, and find your happiness in seeking first the kingdom of heaven.

Herbert. The new birth, then, is having a heart given us to love the things, which by nature we hate. Mother, how shall I gain this heart? Shall I get it of myself?

Mother. No, Herbert, it is the gift of God. But you can seek for it, you can pray for it. You can read the word of God, that tells you what you must do to be saved. But, after all, a new heart God alone can give.

Herbert. Well then, mother, I may as well leave off seeking.

Mother. Do you remember, my child, the conduct of Esther, when the Jews were in trouble? Ahasuerus had given a man power to destroy the whole nation. Now, though Esther was queen, she entered not into the presence of the king unless she was called for. It was contrary to law, and those who disobeyed were likely to lose their lives. Still the king sometimes stretched out his golden sceptre, and then they knew he would be merciful.

All this queen Esther perfectly understood, but she resolved to venture near.

Herbert. And he granted her request, and her people lived.

Mother. Yes, she and her people enjoyed prosperity, which would not have been the case had she not sought it from the king. So it is with you, Herbert. If you do not seek religion, it is certain you will perish. It is certain you will go to the judgment seat of God with your sins unpardoned, and if so, Herbert, you must have your eternal portion with the workers of iniquity. Oh then, be entreated to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him, while he is near. To day, if you will hear his voice: harden not your hearts. Remember, the scriptures say nothing of tomorrow. Give up your heart to God this moment.

Herbert. Mother, will you tell me more about the Savior? Perhaps that will touch my heart, and awaken me to a sense of the importance of religion.

Mother. We are not told what effect the conversation of Christ had upon Nicodemus; neither does that concern us. Our business is with our own hearts. The truths which our Savior uttered are of lasting importance to us.

After this Jesus travelled in the villages of Judea, in company with his disciples, and baptized. Some of the disciples of John, seeing the multitudes flocking to Christ, spoke of it to their master, fearing, I suppose, that he was losing the honor that belonged to him.

Herbert. What did John say, mother?

Mother. He told them that they must be sensible he had always spoken of Christ as greater than himself, and added, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;

and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

As time passed away, our Savior became more extensively known. Meanwhile, John the baptist had been cast into prison.

Herbert. Into prison, mother? How long did he remain there?

Mother. It is thought he remained a year. After that, the birth day of Herod the tetrarch, son of Herod the great, was celebrated.

Herbert. Was Herod a good man?

Mother. No, he was not. He had committed sins, for which John honestly reproved him, and in that way made himself powerful enemies. But I was telling you how his birthday was celebrated. Instead of looking over the year that was past, and acknowledging the goodness of God in sparing him; instead of praying earnestly for the pardon of his sins, and humbling himself before God, he spent the day in feasting and mirth. And in the midst of their revelry, the daughter of Herodias came in and danced before them. And as he was greatly pleased with this folly, he promised to give her whatsoever she desired, even to the half of his kingdom; and he strengthened his promise by an oath.

Herbert. What was this daughter's name, mother?

Mother. Salome, I believe, though it is not mentioned in the bible. Influenced by her mother, this young lady asked for the head of John the baptist in a charger, or dish.

Herbert. Mother, what could have made her think of so cruel a thing? I should not have supposed it possible for such a thought to enter a young lady's head.

Mother. It is horrid indeed, Herbert; but we are told

she was instructed by her mother, who was a very wicked woman; and also that it was the custom of the times to receive in that way the heads of criminals. Had she been a christian female, her whole heart would have shrunk from such barbarity. But Herod granted her request, though with great reluctance.

Herbert. Why, mother? did he like John?

Mother. I don't know that he liked him, my dear, but he doubtless feared to do him wrong, because he knew that he was a good man.

Herbert. Does the bible tell what finally became of the murderers?

Mother. No, though we are informed in history that Herod was engaged in war on account of Herodias, and he was driven from his territories; and that both Herod and Herodias died in exile, hating each other. It is said also that the head of Herodias was cut off. This, however, is not certain.

But to return to the history of our blessed Savior. We are told that he left Judea, and went into Galilee. Which way must he have travelled, Herbert?

Herbert. North.

Mother. What province lay between Judea and Galilee?

Herbert. Samaria.

Mother. Very well, dear. We are told that he came to Sychar, a city near to the parcel of ground, where Jacob's well was. Here he met a woman of Samaria, and asked her to give him water to drink. The woman expressed her astonishment at a thing so unusual; for the Samaritans and the Jews had no dealings with each other.

Herbert. Mother, I forget who the Samaritans were, though you told us, when William and I studied the Old Testament.

Mother. When the ten tribes were carried captive by Shalmaneser, people from Babylon were brought into Samaria, where they adopted the Hebrew religion in a corrupted form, mixing it with their own idolatry. The Samaritans hindered the Jews in the building of the temple after the captivity at Babylon, and the Jews believed them the very worst of men. Brown says that the Samaritans are few in number, and worship at mount Gerizim.

With a woman of this nation Jesus Christ conversed as he journeyed to Galilee; and as he opened to her understanding the truths of religion, she believed that he was a prophet. But as he further conversed with her on this all important subject, he plainly told her that he was the promised Messiah. The woman then went to the city and told what she had heard, and many believed on the Savior.

Herbert. Did any of the people visit him?

Mother. Yes, and invited him to stay with them. He accordingly remained there two days, and many believed. Then our blessed Lord proceeded on his way; and when he arrived at Cana of Galilee, a nobleman went to him to beg that he would heal his son, who was at the point of death.

Herbert. What did our Savior tell him, mother?

Mother. Go thy way; thy son liveth. And he believed, and went his way. When he arrived at home he found his son in health; and on inquiry learned that the fever left him at the very hour that Jesus promised the blessing.

Herbert. And didn't he believe on the Son of God?

Mother. Yes, and his whole house. We next hear of our Savior in his own city, Nazareth, where he had been brought up. It appears from the history given of this

visit, that he was in the constant habit of worshipping at the synagogue on the sabbath. You will remember that, Herbert, if you live to be old enough to go from home.

I wonder if William always attends meeting, said Herbert, instead of giving his mother an answer.

I wish, replied Mrs. Lyman, that I could have as good reason to think that your feelings are right on this subject, as I have to believe that William's are. This recalled the attention of Herbert, and he told his mother that he knew he was not so good as his brother; but he hoped he should be made to remember the sabbath, and keep it holy; and he was sure he should never—*never* forget what his mother had so often told him. After this, Mrs. Lyman continued the history.

When our Savior was in the synagogue on the sabbath, the priests gave him the prophecies to read to the people; and he opened the book, and from Isaiah, read prophecies that were fulfilled by his birth, and as he explained the sacred book, all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words he spoke.

Herbert. The people were much pleased, mother, were they not?

Mother. We are told they were sensible he had spoken well; but instead of rejoicing in the truth, and making a good improvement of it, they began to inquire, Is not this the carpenter's son? as if they were dissatisfied because he was poor, and without any earthly splendor. Do you know what a synagogue is, my son?

Herbert. No, mother, unless it is like our meeting-houses.

Mother. Synagogues were designed for the same purpose that our houses of worship are; but they were a little differently constructed.

Herbert. Will you tell me how they were made?

Mother. I have never read any very particular description. But I should inquire what do you recollect of the temple at Jerusalem?

Herbert. Oh I know mother that it was made in part after the pattern of the tabernacle in the wilderness,—that it was full of splendid ornaments, and that the Jews were obliged to go there at stated periods to worship God.

Mother. Very well, my dear. The Jews were required to go to the temple occasionally; but they had need of public worship more frequently than they could journey to Jerusalem, from which some of them were quite distant. They therefore built them synagogues, of which there was a great number. Every synagogue contained an ark, or chest, large enough to hold the five books of Moses. This ark was placed in that part of the synagogue, that looked towards the ancient temple of Jerusalem. On the same side was a seat for the elders. The rest of the men sat facing the elders, and the ark, while the females occupied the gallery enclosed with lattice work, where they could see without being seen. A chest was placed on each side of the door of the synagogue to collect money, one for the poor, the other for strangers.

Herbert. Mother, what is a lattice?

Mother. A net work of wire was used for windows before the invention of glass, and this was called a lattice. It may likewise be made of pieces of wood crossing each other at small distances. The literal meaning of the term *synagogue*, is *bringing together*.

Herbert. How were the services of the synagogue conducted?

Mother. They were a good deal like the services in our congregations; except that they had different persons

to perform different parts of the services. There was one, who offered the prayers, and it is said they had a liturgy, or prayer, like the Episcopal church. And there was another, whose duty it was to read and expound the scriptures. The ruler of the synagogue had power to call on any one present to perform this service. Accordingly our Savior was invited to read and expound at Nazareth. People for their offences might be cast out of the synagogue; that is, excluded from partaking with others in the religious services there performed, and cut off from all benefits of the Jewish religion.

Herbert. Then our Savior was in such a building as you have described?

Mother. Yes, in his own city Nazareth. And though the people had continually worshipped by sacrifices through him, and read from the Jewish scriptures of his coming, they rejected him, and murmured because he performed miracles at Capernaum, and not among his own people. On hearing this our Savior told them that no prophet was accepted in his own country; and alluding to what Elijah and Elisha had done before him, gave them to understand that he had a right to do as he chose.

Herbert. How did the people like that?

Mother. They were exceedingly angry, thrust him out of the synagogue, and would have done him injury, but he, by a miracle, escaped.

Herbert. Where did he go after that, mother?

Mother. To Capernaum. Here again we find the Savior of sinners teaching upon the sabbath; and here too his love for fallen man is shown by care to the bodies as well as souls of the people. Blessed Redeemer! Oh that his own people bore more of his image, for he constantly went about doing good.

Herbert. What did he do in Capernaum?

Mother. He cast out devils, healed the sick, and performed many great works, for which the people believed on him; and though he withdrew from them, they followed him, and prayed him not to depart from them. You perhaps see nothing to imitate in the conduct of these people.

Herbert thought a few moments, but could not see as he did; when his mother told him he could imitate their love of the presence of the Savior.

But mother, said Herbert, Christ is not upon earth now.

Mother. No, not in person; but by his Spirit he has promised his disciples that he will be with them to the end of the world. And he has also promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them. Do you know the difference, Herbert, between body and spirit?

Herbert. O yes, mother; the spirit is the soul, which we cannot see. It is the part that thinks. You have often told me what the spirit is.

Mother. God is a spirit, and every living person has a soul, or spirit. What is the difference, Herbert, between God, and the spirit of man?

Herbert. Oh, God is great, and can do things that man could not even tell about after they were done. God is every where at the same time, but we can be in only one place. And Christ must be every where too; for good people pray, at least at the monthly concert, all over the world at the same time—he has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be with them.

Mother. You are right, my son, and it is the consola-

tion and only hope of pious people that Christ will be in the midst of them. And such will feel as the people of Capernaum did, a strong desire that Christ may continue with them when they separate. And for you, my beloved child, I would rather seek the presence of Christ to guide you as a disciple, than all the riches or honors the whole world could afford.

Herbert. These I suppose are of no consequence after all. If they had been, the Savior would have shared them.

Mother. That is a very sensible remark, Herbert; but it is far easier, even for those, who are older than you, to make a sensible remark, than to govern their lives by correct principles.

Herbert. I know that, mother. I see that it is necessary that I should forsake the world, and believe on Christ; and I can talk a good deal about it; but, mother, I am yet in my sins.

Mother. Then the wrath of God is yet abiding on you. Do you think, Herbert, that you are at liberty to slight the Savior, who was promised, expected, and shadowed forth by the types of the Jewish law four thousand years before his birth? Do you think yourself at liberty to know your duty so plainly, and yet neglect him, who was in the bosom of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with him? My dear son, delay no longer, but give yourself away to Christ.

Such was the conversation of this faithful mother; and I hope all, who read it will feel as if it were addressed to them. Are not your hearts affected when you think of Jesus Christ? when you remember how constantly he was employed in doing good to all around him? Now *you* seek to please yourselves. Jesus Christ had no selfish feel-

ings. Oh how unlike the Redeemer are all the sinful children of men. But, children, you must study his life, and pray to be made to bear his image. Pray that you may now give yourselves up entirely to Christ.



LECTURE V.

Various labors—Christ cures the sick of the palsy—Calls Matthew—Heals the man at the pool of Bethesda—and the withered hand—Pharisees and Saducees.

WE left our lesson, Herbert, where our blessed Savior was just going from Capernaum. Where was Capernaum?

Herbert. In the eastern part of the province of Galilee. Why, mother, what has become of the lots, into which the land of Canaan was divided?

Mother. You will recollect, my son, that hundreds of years had rolled away since that division was made, and this lapse of time would of course bring a great change of inhabitants, and an entire alteration of names. From this change in countries arises the necessity of ancient geography. If you were to look upon the map of Asia, which you use at school, for Galilee and Capernaum, you would find they are not there. You have only a modern atlas. But we have wandered. The next thing we hear of our Savior is, of his walking by the sea of Galilee. Where was that, my dear?

Herbert. East of Capernaum, mother. Was not there the place where our Savior called his disciples? I re-

member a great deal about the New Testament, I have studied it so much at the sabbath school.

Mother. Yes, this is the place where Jesus Christ stood, and saw Peter and Andrew his brother, with James and John, in the humble but respectable employment of fishermen. Happy men! how were they honored to be with their Master, and witness all that he did to save a lost world; to hear his prayers, share his friendship, and "learn of him."

Herbert. Where did Christ go after he had chosen his disciples?

Mother. He travelled about, my dear, in different places. We next hear of him in Capernaum healing a maniac; and soon after, restoring health to the sick mother of Peter; and are next told that he preaches and performs miracles and cures throughout Galilee. Lepers are cleansed, and society benefitted wherever he goes.

Herbert. Did the people love the Savior, mother?

Mother. No, dear. Mankind from the earliest ages of the world to the present time, have been prone to disbelieve; and though he performed miracles, which no man could have performed, many murmured against him.—There is a particular account given in the second chapter of Mark, of a man, who was healed of the palsy, which excited the anger of some, who witnessed the miracle.

Herbert. Will you please to relate it, mother?

Mother. Capernaum seems to have been the place where our Savior principally resided during his ministry. He had been absent some time, and upon his return, the sick flocked around him, to share the benefit of his healing mercy. They had witnessed his power, and believed he was able to relieve their distress. Under these circumstances Jesus Christ preached the word. The crowd.

was great;—so great that those anxious to come near, could not reach the presence of the Savior. In this emergency there appeared a man sick of the palsy, and so enfeebled by the disease that he was carried upon his bed. Those, who performed this office, finding it utterly impossible to see the Savior, took the roof from the house, and let down the invalid upon his bed.

Herbert. How could they do that? Their houses must have been different from ours.

Mother. Probably they were, my son, though a man in that situation would think little of difficulties, when there was an opportunity for him to regain his health. We are informed by Harmer, in his observations upon eastern manners and customs, that the roofs of houses in the east were built, sometimes of rushes or reeds, and that they were flat. In this case they would be easily taken off.

Herbert. So they would, mother. But what did our Savior say to the sick man?

Mother. He spoke kindly to him; and when he saw how much trouble he had taken to come to him, and how strong his faith was, he said to him, son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Herbert. Yes, now I remember about it, mother. They did not know that Christ and the Father were one; and thought he was wicked to undertake to forgive sins, which none but God can do.

Mother. You are right, my son. Their feelings undoubtedly arose from their not understanding the character of Christ. But God will not accept ignorance as an excuse for our sins, if we have the means of gaining a correct knowledge of the subject, as those had who disbelieved in this instance.

Herbert. How, mother?

Mother. When our Savior saw the feelings of the multitude, and knew that they thought it blasphemy in him to forgive sins, he wrought the miracle of healing; and asked the multitude, whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk. But that ye may know the Son of man hath power to forgive sins upon earth, I say unto thee, arise, take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

Herbert. And the sick man obeyed, did he not mother?

Mother. Yes dear, and the multitude acknowledged that they had seen strange things. Then they glorified God. The next important event in the history of our Savior was the calling of Matthew to be his disciple.

Herbert. Mother, I should like to know a little more about the disciples. You only tell me their names, and when they were called to follow Christ.

Mother. I presume it would be pleasant, my son. When I have finished the history of the Savior, I will tell you more about the apostles, how they lived and died, and what they suffered for the cause of religion.

Herbert. I thank you mother. But it is said our Savior saw Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom. I want to know what that means.

Mother. Matthew was a publican; that is, a tax gatherer, or collector of the Roman tribute. As this was an office, that afforded those of an avaricious, oppressive disposition, a good opportunity to promote their dishonest gains, they were principally men of this character that engaged in it, from which cause the very name of publican was odious to the Jews. In this ensnaring occupation, Matthew was engaged. He was sitting at the receipt of custom; at his office, a station where he was accustomed to transact business. But immersed as he was

in his worldly pursuits, his heart was prepared cheerfully to obey the call of Christ. He arose and followed him.

Herbert. What shall you tell me about next?

Mother. Do you recollect, Herbert, the mercy of Jesus Christ to a sick man, who had waited for healing thirty eight years at the pool of Bethesda?

Herbert. Yes, I recollect it, mother; but I never understood about the pool. Will you have the kindness to explain it to me?

Mother. I can give you little explanation, my dear. The account given in the bible is brief. The pool was on the eastern side of Jerusalem. On each side of it were porches, or porticoes. These were occupied by the sick and infirm, who came to be benefitted by the waters, which an angel troubled. And whosoever first stepped in after the troubling of the water, was made whole of whatever disease he had.

Herbert. I don't understand that, mother. How could it be?

Mother. All I can tell you, my son, is, that it was a miracle. It is related in the bible as a plain matter of fact, without any explanation as to the manner by which it was accomplished. The pool is said now to be an hundred and twenty paces long, forty broad and eight deep, but empty of water.

Herbert. How pleasant it must be to travel in that country, and see all these places, which we read about in the bible.

Mother. Yes, Herbert, very pleasant. How desirable to be pious, and go as a missionary, and tell the ignorant inhabitants of Jesus Christ, who gave up his life for sinners without the walls of this very city, of which we have been speaking.

Herbert looked thoughtful, then brushed away a tear, but as he said nothing, his mother proceeded to speak of the man who was healed at Bethesda.

He was undoubtedly a very poor man, or he would have been able to obtain some one to put him into the pool; and he must have been very friendless not to find some one willing to do it without compensation. This my son, shows us something of the condescending kindness of him, who went about doing good. And Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and will be as much affected with the distresses of the poor and friendless now, as he was while upon earth. Why is it, Herbert, that you do not love this Savior? How can you follow him about from place to place, and see him scattering blessings to the poor and needy, and not have your heart filled with gratitude and praise? Herbert conversed sometime with his mother, and at last concluded there was no excuse for him, and said he hoped God would give him a new heart, and a better mind.

Peaceful as our Savior was, continued Mrs. Lyman; and constantly employed in acts of mercy and benevolence, many were watching him desiring to find some evil in him; and though they were disappointed as to that, still they accused him of breaking the sabbath day.

Herbert. For what, mother?

Mother. Merely because as he was passing through a cornfield, he took a few of the ears of corn, and eat them, rubbing them in his hand.

Herbert. How could they think that eating was breaking the sabbath?

Mother. It is not probable that they did really think that it was, or that so trifling an act as plucking the ears of corn, was any violation of the spirit of the divine com-

mand. But they could find nothing more criminal to say of him. I should have told you that what we call corn, that is, maize, was unknown in the eastern countries; but wheat, rye, barley and rice were known by the name of corn. But to return to the history of the Savior. The Pharisees and Scribes continued to watch the progress of Christ; and as he went into the synagogue on the sabbath, and met there a man afflicted with a withered, useless hand, they thought at once that his benevolent heart would lead him to pity and heal the sufferer; and they judged correctly.

But before the miracle of healing was performed, our divine Master, grieved for the hardness of heart manifested among the people, inquired of them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath day, or to do evil?—to save life, or to kill? For as he could look into their hearts, he saw how filled they were with hypocrisy and guilt; and knew, while they were watching him to see if he would relieve a sufferer on that day, that they might accuse him of breaking the sabbath, they were plotting, on this very day, how they might take his life.

Herbert. Were they mother? Then that is why he asked them if it was lawful to save life or to kill.

Mother. Undoubtedly, my dear.

Herbert. But who were the Scribes and Pharisees, mother?

Mother. Scribes were persons employed in copying the law, and registering the affairs of the kingdom. They were a very respectable class of people, because there were few in that age of the world, who could write. Many of the tribe of Levi were scribes; but in the time of the Savior, they were a corrupt and wicked class of people.

Herbert. And the Pharisees, mother?

Mother. It is not certainly known when this sect arose, though probably about one hundred and fifty years before Christ. They called themselves Pharisees, or separatists, on account of their strictness. They were numerous and powerful; thought that none but the Jews would be happy in another world, and expected that when the Messiah came, he would be a temporal, or earthly prince; one whose kingdom was of this world.

Herbert. And when the Messiah appeared, and was so different from what they expected, they could not love him.

Mother. No, they were disappointed. Very likely with all their strictness, they were altogether lovers of this world, caring little for the kingdom of heaven. For though they were attentive to the ceremonial law, and prayed and fasted often, and did many works of charity, they were dishonest and cruel, afflicted widows, and those who had none to protect them, and they did all they could to harm our blessed Savior. Most of the Jews at the present day are said to be Pharisees.

Herbert. And wasn't there a sect called Saducees, mother?

Mother. Yes; and the sect derived its name from Sadok, pupil of Antigonus of Sochœus, president of the Sanhedrim, who flourished about two hundred and sixty years before Christ. He taught that it was reasonable that we should serve God without being influenced by hope of reward or fear of punishment. Sadok misunderstood the doctrine of his master, and inferred that there was no future state of rewards and punishments. The principal tenet of the Saducees was, that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, and that the soul of man perishes together with the body. There were likewise the Galile-

ans, a sect that originated from the Pharisees, who tried to shake off the Roman yoke, saying that tribute was due to none but God. This doctrine was first advanced by Judas the Galilæan; and the Zealots so often mentioned in Jewish history are supposed to have been the followers of this Judas.

But to proceed with the history of our Savior. Multitudes continued to follow him, to whom he did good, healing their diseases, and showing them mercy. The same compassionate spirit led the blessed Redeemer to deliver those instructions, which are contained in his sermon on the mount. For he had no better accommodations than a mountain, in which to deliver this excellent discourse. But I will tell you about this at another time.



LECTURE VI.

Sermon on the mount—John's message to the Savior.

MOTHER, said Herbert, as he took his seat by her side to listen once more to those instructions he loved so well, the sermon on the mount does not tell us what we must believe about Christ, or his coming.

No, replied Mrs. Lyman; the great object appears to be, to correct abuses of the Jewish law, to give the disciples a knowledge of the duties, which their religion enjoined upon them, and to make them possess more of the spirit of our Savior.

Herbert. Yes, mother, I have learnt the sermon, the whole of it.

Mother. I am glad you have, my son, and I wish you to remember it is the language of the Savior; therefore

there can be no mistake in it. It is all to be treasured in our hearts. Do you remember who Christ tells us are blessed?

Herbert. Yes, mother, there are eight different characters. My sabbath school teacher talked with us a great deal about the sermon on the mount.

Mother. What did he say, Herbert?

Herbert. He said he supposed if he were to ask us who were the happy, we should answer, the rich, the great, and those who spend their days in mirth and pleasure. And mother, I did think so then.

Mother. But now, my child, I trust you have learned to be meek, and humble, to mourn for sin, to desire greatly to be righteous, to be a peace maker; and to follow instructions so kindly given, is far better than any pleasure we could take, independent of the cultivation of right feelings.

Herbert. Yes, mother, I know it in my mind.

Mother. That is, your understanding is convinced.

Herbert. That is what I should have said if I had known.

Mother. The Redeemer knew perfectly well what was in man. He understood how we all look to outward circumstances,—the things we possess or desire, for that comfort, which can only be found in keeping his commands. The poor in spirit are mentioned first. What do you understand by that, my son?

Herbert. The teacher said it was humility; but I don't know as I can exactly tell what that is.

Mother. Humility consists in having a low opinion of ourselves, and has its foundation in self-knowledge.

Herbert. But, mother; then every one can't be hum-

ble. There is our minister, who is so pious; how can he have a low opinion of himself?

Mother. The question from you is very natural, my son; our minister compared with some other men, is certainly good; but compared with the law of God, he would tell you in many things he offends, and in all comes short.

Do you understand?

Herbert. I think not, mother.

Mother. You know God in his law has told us to love him with our whole hearts; and if we so much as *think* wrong, we sin. Do you suppose then, there is a person upon earth that does not sin?

Herbert. O no, mother, not one. I did not think the law was so strict, though you have told me so before, I dare say. Who can be saved? added Herbert, thoughtfully.

Those, and those only can be saved, replied his mother, who depend on the Savior, look only to his blood and righteousness, as a reason why God should accept them, while they are every day humbled under a sense of their utter unworthiness; but no wise discouraged, press forward, studying the perfect law of God, and every day praying and striving to live as that commands. This is what is meant by the christian's warfare. But the time is coming, when these mourners will be comforted, when in heaven all their trials will cease, and they will stand upon mount Zion, the city of the living God, and fill all heaven with praises for the way of salvation through Christ. O Herbert,—do you not wish to be prepared to join this happy company?

Mrs. Lyman conversed much with her son upon the all important instruction conveyed in the sermon on the mount, but a small part of which I shall be able to give

to my young readers, though I cannot omit what was said of the government of the temper, as it is a subject, which children ought thoroughly to understand.

The low and vulgar language used by the uneducated, said Mrs. Lyman to her son, I trust you will never adopt, let your anger be ever so great. I do not expect to hear you call any person a fool; but Herbert,—I have seen you angry, even to sin.

Herbert, blushing asked his mother, if it was proper on any occasion to be angry?

It would be better, my son, she replied, could we always avoid it. A person may show as decided disapprobation without anger as with it, and show it far more judiciously.

Herbert. I don't think so, mother. When a boy insults me, I want him to see that I am mad, in good earnest. Then he will not treat me so again.

Mother. You want him to. But in what part of your bible do you read that you have a right to make your wishes the rule of your actions? The law of God must guide us; and our Savior says, Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool; shall be in danger of hell fire. When any do wrong, we may feel displeasure, and we may express it. But if we are angry without a just cause, God will not hold us guiltless; and if we are immoderately angry for any cause, we sin.

Herbert. But mother; it will be very hard, I think, never to get angry, when there are so many teasing people in the world.

Mother. Yes, my son, it will be a difficult task to rule your spirit; but it is a great and good work. And I wish you to remember that your bible tells you that he that

ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city. If then it is so important, you see you must be in earnest about the work.

Herbert. I dare say you are right, mother, but it seems harder than any thing you have told me yet; and I don't think I could tell how to begin.

Mother. In the first place, you must pray often that God would help you to rule your spirit. Then you must watch against the first risings of temper, and resolve not to speak till you can speak pleasantly; and you will find every time you gain a victory over your temper, that something is done towards forming a habit of self-command. You have read the life of Scott in the sabbath school library.

Herbert. Yes, mother, and thought I wished every boy in the land could read it.

Mother. So do I, my son; they would find their time well spent. But what I was going to tell you, this pious minister, that did so much good, had a violent temper. Now no person is to blame for having a quick temper; but he is to blame, if he does not try to govern it. Scott was sensible of his infirmity, and watched and prayed over it, till he became mild and gentle.

Herbert. Did he, mother? Then people can overcome their temper.

Mother. O yes, my son. God never requires us to do any thing, that he does not give us power to perform. Self-government will assist us in attending to the duties enjoined in the last part of this sermon. *Judge not.* That teaches us that we must not talk about the faults of others, or think they are in the wrong, when perhaps we do not know any thing about it. We must not judge; for if we are severe with others, God will be severe with us.

Herbert was exceedingly interested in studying his duty in the bible, and often questioned his mother about parts of this blessed sermon, which he did not understand. And I doubt not he will be the better through life for what he then learned, and if he rightly improves this knowledge, better in the life to come. Let all children think of this; for a knowledge of right and wrong is as important to them as it was to Herbert.

We are not told, said Mrs. Lyman, where the mount was situated, upon which the sermon was delivered; but probably it was in the vicinity of Capernaum. Do you recollect where that was, my son?

Herbert. It was in the province of Galilee, in the eastern part, near the lake of Gennesareth. But what makes you think the mount was near Capernaum, mother?

Mother. Immediately after coming down from the mount, we are told that Jesus entered into Capernaum. And we have an interesting account of his continued care and kindness towards the children of men; for a Centurion met him, desiring mercy for a sick servant.

Herbert. What is a Centurion, mother?

Mother. The captain of an hundred men. It is probable the Centurion here spoken of was quartered at Capernaum, where Jesus lived, and though he was a Gentile, having seen the works, which our Savior performed, he believed on him. You recollect the power and mercy of our blessed Lord, and how very humble the Centurion seemed.

Herbert. Yes, mother, for he said he was not worthy that Christ should come under his roof. Then our Savior said, I have not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel. Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.

Mother. You are right, dear. You notice this man

had a deep sense of his unworthiness, though our Savior commended him, and said he possessed greater faith than he had seen even among the favored Israelites. You here see how highly our Savior values this meek and lowly spirit.

The next day our Lord raised to life the only son of a widow, as they were bearing him to his grave, and presented him alive to his mother.

Herbert. Did not every one believe on him, mother?

Mother. Not every one, Herbert. But John, who was then in prison, sent two of his disciples to him to inquire, Art thou he that should come?—or do we look for another?

Herbert. John? I thought he was dead, mother. You recollect, though I gave you the particulars of his death, I told you he was in prison a year, and I do not know exactly at what time he was beheaded.

Herbert. What did the Savior say to his message?

Mother. While the messengers were with him, he healed the sick, and performed so many wonderful works, that they were at once satisfied that he must be the expected Messiah. And he sent them to tell John. You see, Herbert, *Jesus Christ showed his character, not by words, but by works.* You see, too, how far he was from flattery; for it was not till these disciples had left him, that he bore public testimony to the character of John the baptist.

Herbert. What did he say of him, mother?

Mother. That among men there was not a greater than John the baptist. Still though these works were performed, and performed publicly; and though our Savior had explained and enforced the Jewish law, few followed him as disciples; few believed on him from among the Jews;

and our Lord reproached them for their unbelief, for their impenitence and insensibility.

Our Lord reproached them. My child, whoever you are that reads this book, think of this. Our Lord reproached the Jews, because they were insensible to their wants, and because they did not believe in him. Now he looks upon you just as he did upon the Jews; and if you have not a new heart, if you do not believe in, love and obey him, he knows it, and he will reproach you with it, when you stand before him at the last day. Turn then to him. Humble yourself as did the Centurion, and he will have mercy upon you.



LECTURE VII.

Christ eats with a Pharisee—and a woman washes his feet and anoints his head.

As one day succeeded another without any uncommon occurrence at the cottage, Mrs. Lyman did not often fail to oblige her son with something from the bible, while, anxious to reward his mother by the most fixed attention, he was always by her side at the expected hour. What next, dear mother? was usually his first question. This question was asked one fine moonlight evening, when Mrs. Lyman was listening to the parting sounds, that lingered around the hum of business, and gazing for one idle moment on the curling, bounding, eddying stream, that rolled below her, and upon which, with so many varieties of light and shade, the soft beams of the moon were playing.

Roused by the inquiry, she threw back the long train of thought, that is wont to rush in at such a moment, and

in answer told him the following interesting story, prefaced with remarks on eastern manners.

The furniture of the oriental or eastern dwellings, says Horne, at least in the earliest ages, was very simple. That of the poorer classes consisted of but few articles, and those such as are absolutely necessary. Instead of chairs they sat on mats or skins; and the same articles, on which they laid a mattress, served them instead of bedsteads, while their upper garments were used for a covering. This circumstance accounts for our Lord's commanding the paralytic to take up his bed, and go into his house. The more opulent had fine carpets, couches, or divans, and sofas, on which they sat, lay and slept. In later times their couches were splendid, and the frames inlaid with ivory, and the coverlids rich and perfumed. On these sofas, in the latter ages of the Jewish state, they universally reclined when taking their meals; resting on their sides with their heads towards the table, so that their feet were accessible to one, who came behind the couch.

Our Savior as he journeyed came by special invitation to the house of a Pharisee, to *eat with him*, as the scripture expresses it. A woman, who had been a very great sinner, but who was penitent for her offences, hearing that Jesus was to be a guest at the house of the Pharisee, took an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and breaking the seal, poured the perfume upon the head of the Savior.

Herbert. Was it customary to do so in that age, mother?

Mother. Probably anointing was, though we have reason to suppose this was out of the common course, as we find those, who witnessed the offering, complained of the expense. But our Lord, as we shall see, was far

from condemning her. Having poured the perfume upon him, she began to wash his feet with her tears, wiping them with the hair of her head.

Herbert. Did she weep so badly, mother?

Mother. Yes, child, and her tears were those of penitence and sorrow.

Herbert. But wasn't it odd for her to wash the feet of the Savior?

Mother. No, dear, that too was an eastern custom, which arose partly from the peculiar cleanliness of the inhabitants, and partly from the dust, which by clinging to their feet, caused an itching that obliged them to use water. We see in the bible frequent mention made of washing the feet as an act of hospitality and kindness.

Herbert. What did our Savior say to the woman, mother?

Mother. Nothing to her. He had addressed his conversation to Simon the Pharisee, who entertained him.

Herbert. Why to him, mother?

Mother. Our Lord knew what was in his thoughts. He was perfectly sensible that Simon supposed he was not a prophet, because he had suffered a sinner to approach him.

Herbert. And what did he say to him?

Mother. He told him that a certain creditor had two debtors; the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both:—required nothing from either. Our Lord then inquired of Simon which would love him most? Simon could see at once, that it would be he, to whom most was forgiven. Our Lord then looking upon the poor penitent, said to Simon, I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my

feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much. And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.

Herbert. Then our Lord did not, after all, forgive her because she washed his feet, and anointed his head.

Mother. O no, my son; he forgave her simply because she believed on him; believed that his blood was sufficient to wash away her guilt, and his mercy free to pardon her great offences.

Herbert. And this, I think you have often told me, is the only way, in which we can be saved.

Mother. Every person, who lives, has offended God, and can make no satisfaction. Some commit greater offences than others, which our Savior represented by the fifty and five hundred pence. Yet all are debtors in a greater or less degree, and all alike are unable to pay. Therefore when we have faith in Christ, for that, God freely forgives us.

Herbert. I don't see then what use there is in good works, if they don't at least help to save us.

Mother. What do you suppose made this sorrowing female, pour out her precious perfume on the head of the Savior.

Herbert. Oh, it was because she loved him.

Mother. And what made you, when you gathered the grapes this evening, select the finest bunches for me, my child?

Herbert. Because I had a thousand times rather you would have them than to eat them myself.

Mother. But you did not expect I should pay you for them.

Herbert. Pay me? O no, certainly not. I did it from love, mother.

Mother. And so, depend upon it, will every christian feel that he loves God; and that it is his greatest happiness to do his will, not for a reward, but from love—pure love, as you would give me the grapes. From love to God the christian will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, send the bible to the destitute, and the teacher to the ignorant, and God owns it as done to himself.

Herbert. Now I see, mother, what it is to show our faith by our works; and I am glad I understand it. But do not some good people have faith, who do not perform these good works.

Mother. No, my son, that is altogether impossible. Faith without works is dead. Genuine faith may always be known by this simple means; it always will produce good works. By their fruits shall ye know them. Should I have reason to think you loved me, if you did not try to do what I wished?

Herbert. Certainly not.

Mother. Neither will Christ think that we love him if we do not try to please him; for he himself has said, If ye love me, keep my commandments.

LECTURE VIII.

Parable of the sower—Christ goes to Godara—Heals the man possessed with devils—and the ruler's daughter.

THE next thing we hear of our Savior is, that he was preaching and teaching throughout Galilee, and that he was doing good to the bodies as well as the souls of men. At one place where he stopped, some one remarked to him that his mother and his brethren without desired to see him. Do you know what the condescending Savior answered?

Herbert. No I don't, mother.

Mother. Whoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. We here see how highly our blessed Lord values the poor endeavors of those, who love and serve him. Condescending Savior! Who would not obey his voice and live? Many while hearing of his goodness think they will serve God; but when the voice of the teacher ceases, their good resolutions pass away. This the Savior saw; and to instruct the people, who gathered around him, he spake the parable of the sower.

Herbert. What is a parable?

Mother. A story to make people better understand the truth. This story is called a "figurative representation of truth." It was customary in ancient times for those, who were considered wise, to instruct by parables; but it was thought very wrong for the ignorant to attempt to instruct in this way. We are not informed where our Savior spoke the parable of the sower, further than that it was by the sea side. Probably it was by the sea of Galilee, which was near Capernaum, where our Lord dwelt.

Thinking perhaps that the great multitude that thronged around him would be better accommodated, he entered into a ship and taught.

Herbert. A floating chapel! Then it was our Savior who set the example of preaching in a vessel. I wish the seamen would think of that, I am sure it would make them love the Bethel Flag.

Mother. Very probably they do, my son.

Herbert. What parable did you say our Savior spoke?

Mother. The parable of the sower. The sower deposited his seed in four different kinds of ground; by the way side, where the earth was trodden and hard, so that the fowls of the air immediately picked it up; upon stoney ground where it would not flourish, because there was not sufficient depth of earth, among thorns, which choked that, which was sown and rendered it unfruitful, and then some of the seed fell upon good ground, and it bore fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold.

Herbert. Then Jesus Christ explained the parable, didn't he mother?

Mother. Yes, dear; and I hope you will read it often, and think much of it. I have repeated the parable for this very purpose. Children at meeting, bible class, or sabbath school often hear that which they do not perfectly understand. Then cometh the wicked one, and catchest away that which is sown in their hearts.

Herbert. How is that done? I don't think I understand.

Mother. Trifling, foolish thoughts, if indulged, will drive away every thing else. When therefore you find such thoughts crowding good instructions from your mind, you must think of this parable, and drive them away at once. And you must pray God to help you re-

member what you have heard, that it may enable you to act right.

Herbert. Who are the stony ground hearers?

Mother. They are those who hear, and seem interested, but the impressions made by truth upon their minds are not deep, and of course they are not lasting. For a little while they seem to love the cause of religion, but they quickly yield to temptation, and soon become just as thoughtless, and even more hardened than before.

Herbert. What are the thorns, that spring up and choke the word, mother?

Mother. What makes you forget religious truth, Herbert?

Herbert. I don't know as I can tell.

Mother. I will help you. You often have a great many plans for amusement; and instead of treasuring up what you hear, you think perhaps, tomorrow I shall go and get some cherries with James Hopkins. James has got a new book. I wonder if mother will get me a book, now I have just had a kite, I can't have every thing. Now you readily see, Herbert, that such a train of thinking would indeed choke the word. Do you suppose you have ever indulged such thoughts?

Herbert. Why, not the very things you mention, but I know I have often had such kind of plans, when I have been to sabbath school.

Mother. Doubtless you have, and every other child that has attended with a wicked heart. I mention this that you may know, when such thoughts come into your mind, that they are *thorns*; they must not be indulged for a moment. You must drive them away, and resolutely fix your mind upon the instruction that you ought to receive; that the seed may fall upon good ground, and you

be made wiser and better, here and hereafter. We have many privileges, my child, and God may justly expect us to profit by them. He has a right to look for fruit; yes, Herbert,—and from the instructions you are this moment receiving.

After this our Savior had occasion to cross the lake of Gennessareth; the same that is sometimes called the sea of Galilee. His errand was one of mercy and kindness.

Herbert. What was it mother?

Mother. To heal a poor afflicted demoniac. The twelve disciples followed him, and as their master slept, a violent storm arose, which almost filled the vessel with water.

Herbert. Were not the disciples afraid?

Mother. Yes, though it was a sin that they were so,—with Christ in the vessel, they should not have feared any ill. However, when they awoke the Savior, his rebuke was mild.

Herbert. What did he say?

Mother. Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? And he rebuked the sea, and it was perfectly calm. Then the disciples probably understood more of Him, whom the winds and the waves obey; and they feared, while they talked together of his wonderful power.

Arriving at the country of the Gadarenes, we are told that a man with an unclean spirit met the Savior. Where was the country of the Gadarenes?

Herbert. East of Gennessareth.

Mother. This is the account given by Mark. Matthew speaks of two men possessed with devils.

Herbert. Were there not two, mother?

Mother. Certainly, my son. Whatever is written in

the bible is true. There is no forgetting about it. Holy men wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. They did not depend upon what they remembered.

Herbert. I don't know as I exactly understand you, mother.

Mother. God caused them to think what he wished them to write. This is called writing by inspiration. But to return to the man. Probably one was much more remarkable than the other, and of him Mark might speak. He seemed indeed in a miserable condition, and had his dwelling among the tombs, which were out of the city in desolate places; and always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones.

Herbert. Poor man; was he crazy?

Mother. Not as people are deranged at the present day. I was reading to day an interesting lecture of president Appleton's on this subject. He thinks those who are mentioned as possessed with devils, were really afflicted by the evil spirits, which God permitted to visit the earth.

Herbert. But did he really live *in* the tombs?

Mother. A late writer in the east says, The graves of the principal citizens are distinguished by having cupolas or vaulted chambers of three, four or more square yards built over them. And as these very frequently lie open, and occasionally shelter travellers from the inclemency of the weather, the demoniac might with propriety enough have had his dwelling among the tombs.

The man, when he saw Jesus, ran and worshipped him; the power of the evil spirit being suddenly suspended. Then the spirit, or rather the spirits, for it seems there were many of them, besought the Lord not to torment them;

but when they found the compassionate Redeemer would relieve the suffering man, they begged the Savior not to send them away out of the country, but to permit them to enter a herd of swine that was there feeding. And when he had given leave they entered into the swine, and they ran violently into the sea, and were choked, or drowned. This was much talked of; and when people came to see the man, they found him sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

Herbert. What did the man say?

Mother. He prayed that he might be with Christ. Doubtless he believed the promised Messiah had come.

Herbert. Did our Savior suffer him to go with him?

Mother. No; he bade him return to his friends, which he did, proclaiming to all the great things that had been done for him. And it is said, All men did marvel. Thus the character of Christ was made known to a wondering world.

We next hear of his dining with Matthew, the publican: the same who is called Levi by Mark and Luke, which name some suppose was given him after he became a disciple of Christ. You recollect what a publican was.

Herbert. Yes, mother; a tax gatherer.

Mother. From the situation of Matthew we may suppose he was collecting at the port of Capernaum. He made a feast, and while Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him to hear him. Matthew had been called to follow the Savior; and he probably thought the greatest kindness he could do his old companions was, to bring them into the society of the Messiah. We therefore find there were many present as his guests.

Herbert. They were not very respectable people, I think, mother.

Mother. The principal collectors were; but the publicans were an inferior kind of collectors. These were very oppressive, and the Jews hated them. But we find the Savior noticed this class of people with a desire to do them good.

Herbert. Yes, and did not the Jews find fault with him because he went with them.

Mother. Yes, they did; but he told them he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Herbert. Was it this Matthew, who wrote the book in the New Testament?

Mother. The gospel of Matthew? yes dear, it was. This poor ignorant publican, whom our Savior called to be his disciple, was afterwards inspired to write the history of the Savior and his works. But to return to the history. The Pharisees gathering around, began to question the propriety of his conduct. This led to much conversation, which, however, was suddenly interrupted by the arrival of a ruler of the Jews. Afflicted by the sickness of a little daughter, who was very dear to him, he came to ask Jesus to save her. And he arose and immediately followed him.

Herbert. How much our Savior had to do.

Mother. Your remark is just. He was constantly employed in doing good, and in this, my son, we have an example that we should try to follow. Young as you are, you must learn to think of others, and endeavor in your small way, to be useful.

Herbert. It seems as if just a boy, as I am, can do but little. I know I can save a very little to put into my charity box; and earn a little; but what else could I do?

Mother. You could try to influence other boys to do the same. You can lend what good books you have; and you can speak of what your teachers tell you of the way of duty. But all this must be done modestly, and because our Savior approves it; and not to be seen by others. The eye of God is always upon our hearts; and if we do the least thing of the kind to have our fellow creatures praise us, God will not accept the offering at our hand. When thou doest thine alms, said our Savior, do not sound a trumpet before thee.

Herbert. It seems to be a great duty to feel for others; but do you suppose the good people all remember it?

Mother. I hope they do, Herbert, for it is more blessed to give than to receive. But *my* business is with myself. God will never inquire of us how other people have performed their duty. The question will be, what have *you* done?

Herbert. It is a solemn thought. If God should take me away now, how could I answer him?

Mother. How could you, indeed, my son? But you have no assurance that he will not do it. Oh then now give yourself away, and seek to do his will. But we digress often. We were following our blessed Lord to the house of Jairus the ruler. On his way there, a poor afflicted woman touched the hem of his garment, and was healed of sickness that had been upon her for years. Jesus commending her for her faith, passed on. And when he arrived at the house of Jairus, he saw the minstrels and the people making a noise; for the child was dead.

Herbert. Did the Jews have music at their funerals, mother?

Mother. Some writers think it was not among the customs peculiar to the Jews. The Gentiles around them

practised it, and the Jews might sometimes imitate them in this respect. Others suppose, and in this opinion I concur, that they assembled many together at the place where a person had expired; and mourned over them with great noise. This appears to have been the case at the death of Jairus' daughter; and the minstrels referred to were probably persons who were hired as public mourners. In some eastern nations, women go round in companies with music, to lament the dead.

The Jews were accustomed to mourn thirty days. Josephus says that among the Jews, single families, or bodies of relatives, mourned together; and when a public character died, a whole city joined in the mourning. Women are more frequently spoken of as mourners than men. Singing at funerals is likewise supposed by writers on this subject, to have been common to Jews, Mahometans, and Christians at the east.

Jesus, who knew his own power, and that with a word he could raise the child from what to him was but a sleep, commanded those around to give place. The multitude, however, seemed altogether faithless. Then our Savior sent the people away; and taking the hand of the child, raised her to life.

Herbert. Did Jesus pray to God for assistance, like the prophets?

Mother. No, dear, he had power in himself.

Herbert. Was not every body astonished?

Mother. Doubtless they were. We are told the fame hereof went abroad into all that land. Many had seen the child, and it was generally known that she was dead, so that the miracle could not be doubted.

Herbert. Did Jesus have his disciples with him?

Mother. Yes; he wished them to witness his miracles,

for he expected that after his death, they would preach his doctrines.

Herbert. What are doctrines?

Mother. Opinions, or truths. The truths of the gospel are the doctrines which Christ wished his disciples to spread abroad.

Herbert. What did our Savior next do for the people?

Mother. He restored two blind men to sight, and cast out a dumb spirit from an afflicted person, and then returned to Nazareth, where you know he was brought up.

Herbert. Were not the people very glad to see him?

Mother. No, Herbert; when this heavenly Teacher went to the synagogue to instruct the people, it was evident they despised him.

Herbert. Were not his instructions good?

Mother. O yes, they were astonished at his wisdom, and these mighty works; for they knew he had not been educated in the school of the prophets. They could not receive him. They were acquainted with his mother, and sisters, and brethren, and knew that they were poor, therefore they did not honor him.

Herbert. What did the Savior say?

Mother. He said but little, though we are told he did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief. This second time he left the city blinded by sin; and we are told that he preached throughout Galilee. Where is Galilee?

Herbert. It was the northern province in the land of Canaan, and Nazareth was a city, in the southern part of the province.

Mother. Very well, my dear. Here we should notice the forbearance of the Savior. He had power to call down fire from heaven, to destroy the unbelievers, and

show them that he was to be feared and honored. But he never exercised this power to do injury to any one. The instance, in which he permitted the evil spirits to enter the herd of swine, is the only one on record, where his power was exerted to do injury in any shape. Had he been sinful like ourselves, how many times would he have convinced an unbelieving world of his power, by inflicting judgments. Blessed Redeemer! Oh, how unlike the sinful children of men. Do you not love to study his character that you may learn something of his spirit?

Herbert. I love to study the character of the Savior, but do not think I am in earnest about having his spirit.

Mother. And yet there is nothing, Herbert, that would do one half so much towards making you happy. A restless, ambitious, revengeful person has always the seeds of dissatisfaction in his mind; and while he indulges these feelings, he can never know peace. We learn from this the reasonableness of the divine command, Render to no man evil for evil. See, Herbert, what a delightful evening it is; get your hat, and let us take a short walk.

Herbert. O I should like that above all things; and how I wish William was here to go with us.

LECTURE IX.

The twelve apostles—The Herods—Five thousand fed—Christ retires to pray—Walks on the sea—Christ at Capernaum—Woman of Canaan.

COUSIN Edward, said Herbert, should you like to hear some account of the Savior?

Certainly, Herbert, replied Edward, but why do you ask that?

Because, said Herbert, mother generally tells me something of him every day. When William was at home, we used to have a lecture every Saturday evening; but I have been so lonesome since he left us, that mother is so kind as to instruct me often.

Is she? said Edward. Well, I should think you would like that. 'Ma always helps me about my sunday school lesson, by explaining it to me; and I take so much pleasure that I almost wish the sabbath would come twice in the week. But come. Shall we not go now? So saying they ran into the parlor, and it was soon adjusted that Mrs. Lyman should take up the history, where it came in course, and that was at the calling of the twelve apostles.

Our Savior, said Mrs. Lyman, in the second, or perhaps the third year of his ministry, ordained twelve apostles. I shall not mention their names, as I presume they are familiar to you both.

Herbert. But this was not the first of their being with Christ, was it, mother?

Mrs. Lyman. O no. They had been with the Savior, and learned of him, and were preparing by hearing his conversation, and seeing his life, to go forth as his apostles, and preach every where that men should repent.

Herbert. Then this was their ordination.

Mrs. L. Yes, it seems to have been, and not altogether unlike ordinations at the present day. It differed, however, in some respects, for Christ gave them authority over unclean spirits, and power to heal all manner of sickness. Ministers now have no such gifts. The tenth chapter of Matthew is principally a sermon, which our Savior delivered on the occasion. He told them, among other things, to provide nothing for themselves, for the laborer was worthy of his hire, thus showing that it was the duty of people to support their ministers.

Herbert. Why were there just twelve chosen?

Mrs. L. Perhaps in imitation of the twelve patriarchs, from whom sprang the twelve tribes of Israel. Of these twelve, one had been a publican, and four, if not all the rest were fishermen; but after they were called into the service of Christ, their whole business was to preach, and confirm their doctrine by miracles.

Herbert. Were they successful, mother?

Mrs. L. That you will see as we advance with the history. It was about this time that John the baptist was beheaded. I related the particulars to you, Herbert, when I mentioned his imprisonment.

About this time too, Herod expressed a desire to see Jesus. For he had heard of his fame, and was exceedingly troubled by what some had reported, that John the baptist had risen from the dead. We cannot think he wished to see the Savior from any good motives. Perhaps he wished to satisfy himself whether John the baptist was risen or not.

Herbert. Who were these Herods, mother? I wish to understand as much as I can of the situation of the Jews. I know that they were under the Romans, and that their emperor at the birth of Christ was Augustus Cæsar, and

and that twelve years after the birth of the Savior, Tiberius Cæsar was associated with him; and that in the eighteenth year was the crucifixion. That I got out of my bible dictionary. But I don't know about the Herods.

Mrs. L. There are three Herods mentioned in the New Testament; Herod the great, whose father was thought by some to have been a Jew. He was appointed by the Roman government king of Judea. His reign was long, and filled with cruelties; and his death, which happened a short time before the birth of our Savior, was horrid. He divided his dominions among several of his children, giving to Herod Antipas, the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea. This was the Herod who divorced his wife that he might marry Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, who was still alive. John the baptist re-proved his wickedness, and this was the reason why Herodias sought his life. At the same time Herod Agrippa lived, who was deputy king of Judea. He obtained the banishment of Herod and Herodias. Herod Agrippa was grandson of Herod the great. It was this Herod, who murdered the apostle James; and was he, of whom the scriptures speak as making an oration; and the people said it was the voice of a god and not of a man. To punish him for receiving this flattery, an angel smote him with a dreadful disease, and he was eaten of worms. But let us go on again with the history of our Lord and his disciples.

The next we hear of the disciples is, that they retire and go with their Master to the desert of Bethsaida. The feast of the passover was near. There was a great company present, and Jesus said to Philip, whence shall we buy bread, that they may eat? This he said to try Philip, for he knew perfectly well what to do.

Herbert. What did Philip say, mother?

Mrs. L. He said that two hundred pennyworth of bread was not sufficient, that every one might take a little. Then one of the disciples remarked, that there was a lad present, with five barley loaves and two fishes; but said he, what are they among so many? But Jesus told the company to sit down; which they did, in number five thousand. And the disciples passed the bread and the fishes among the multitude; and when each one had received all that he wished, there were twelve baskets full of fragments left.

Herbert. This was indeed a miracle.

Mrs. L. It is evident the evangelists considered it as such, for it is recorded by all four of them; which is not the case with any other act in the life of Christ.

Herbert. What did the people think of it?

Mrs. L. They were so much affected by it, that they wished to take Christ, and make him a king; for you must remember that all, even the twelve apostles had as yet, imperfect ideas of the Messiah, and could not be convinced that he was not to be a prince, or leader of the Jews in a temporal sense.

Edward. Temporal sense? What is that, aunt?

Mrs. L. Temporal relates to things of this world; spiritual to those of heaven. Now Christ's kingdom is spiritual.

Herbert. What did Jesus say to the people?

Mrs. L. He dismissed them, probably somewhat as religious meetings are dismissed at the present day; and bidding his disciples to take a ship and cross the lake, he retired to the mountain to pray.

Secret prayer, my children, is one of our most important duties. We have the command of our Savior to en-

ter into the closet, and pray; and here we have his example. The Jews sometimes had accommodations upon a mountain for those who wished to retire and pray. Possibly our Savior might have found some shelter, for the night was tempestuous, and we have reason to suppose they spent a great part of it in this retired place.

Edward. I did not know that it was so important to pray in secret. 'Pa always prays night and morning, and I thought this was enough.

Mrs. L. O no, Edward, we are sinners, and liable to go astray. We are continually offending God; and nothing, no, nothing Edward, will do one half so much towards keeping us in the path of duty, as humble, fervent, persevering prayer in secret. Suppose that you were inclined, in your careless moments, to offend me; and suppose you desired, when you thought about it, to please me. If you were to come to me and talk about it two or three times a day, don't you think you should try more to please me than if you never spoke about it?

Edward. I suppose I should a great deal, because I should think and try to do right.

Mrs. L. Just in that way secret prayer will make you watchful; and if God sees any of his creatures striving against sin, and praying in sincerity, he sends his Holy Spirit to guide them aright. For God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit than we are to ask it; or than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto their children.

Herbert. Why mother, do you believe it is true that God is as willing to give his Spirit, as you are to be kind to me?

Mrs. L. Certainly I do; for he has told me so in his own blessed word.

Herbert. Then what excuse is there for those, who remain in sin?

Mrs. L. None, my child, none at all; and that is why I tremble for you, because you are utterly without excuse.

Edward seemed a little uneasy, and turned the conversation by asking if the disciples crossed the lake.

Yes, said Mrs. Lyman; we are told that the ship was in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

Edward. Did he? How could he do it?

Mrs. L. Yes; when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, they were frightened at something so unusual, and doubted whether they saw the Lord. But he soon relieved their fears. *It is I*, he said, *be not afraid*. Then Peter said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to thee upon the water. And he said come.

Herbert. Yes, and then Peter went; but when the wind blew, he was afraid and began to sink; and what then, mother?

Mrs. L. Then he cried unto the Lord; and Jesus stretched out his hand and saved him, though he rebuked him for his want of faith. So, my son, Jesus Christ is now continually stretching forth his hand to the sinful children of men. Though unseen by them, he is always doing them good. He is round about their path, and round about their pillow; and has promised that all things shall work together for their good. But you will remember these promises are made only to pious people; those, who love God; for with the wicked God is angry every every day.

But to proceed with our story. When Jesus had crossed the lake, and arrived in the land of Gennessareth, the sick flocked about him, and as many as touched the hem of his garment, were healed of their sickness. Edward, did you ever study Geography?

Edward. Yes, aunt, I have some.

Mrs. L. Where was the land of Canaan?

Edward. Oh, that is in ancient Geography, I don't know much about that. Was it in Asia?

Mrs. L. Yes, in the south western part. It was given to the twelve tribes of Israel in old Testament times, and divided into lots; each lot taking the name of the tribe, who owned it. After many years, there were great changes in the land of Canaan, and the different parts of it were known by new names. This you will see by looking at this map, which has Galilee on the north, Judea on the south, and Samaria in the centre. East of these countries is the river Jordan, issuing from this lake to the east of Galilee; and here on the west of this lake, our Savior was in the synagogue of Capernaum, when he instructed the people.

Edward had Wilbur's reference bible, and he ran and brought it, and turning to the third map, found it was just such an one as his aunt had described. O here is the very spot, said he; aunt, what was said there?

Mrs. L. The multitude, who had been fed on the east side of the lake, followed Jesus and his disciples to Capernaum; and inquired what they should do, to work the works of God. Jesus answered, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent.

Understanding that Jesus wished to be received as a teacher sent from God, they said, What sign showest thou, that we may see and believe? Then they mentioned Moses, who, as a leader in Israel, had wrought miracles; and it is plain they wished Christ to perform some greater miracle than he had. It was true that he had fed the multitude with a very small quantity.

Herbert. But I suppose they thought that was not equal to having the manna, or bread from heaven.

Mrs. L. Yes, but Christ told them that Moses did not give them the manna. God gave it to them. Then the blessed Savior explained to them, that the manna was a type of himself; and told them, He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Edward. What did he mean, aunt?

Mrs. L. He meant that they they should not desire spiritual good in vain. He was the way of salvation, and all, who would come to God through him, should be saved.

Herbert. Were the people pleased?

Mrs. L. O no. The Jews murmured because they knew his mother, and Joseph, who was called his father. How is it then, said they, that he saith, I came down from heaven? But Jesus conversed much with them; explaining to their darkened understandings what he would do for those who believed on him.

Edward. Did the people believe?

Mrs. L. We may suppose that some were enlightened; but we are told that from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. That is the case with those who hear sermons at the present day. Some go away rejoicing in the truth; others are angry, because it is not just what they wish to hear; and others still, go away caring for none of these things. Thus we see that straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Edward. Did any more Jews come to Christ to be taught?

Mrs. L. Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came; but perhaps they desired more to find fault with the Savior, than to be instructed by him.

Herbert. What did they say?

Mrs. L. Their first inquiry was, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

Edward. What did they mean by that?

Mrs. L. Their elders, or fathers had thought it very important to wash their hands, always, before they ate; and had made it a religious duty. This had been handed down among other rules from father to son, and was regarded as very sacred. These rules, which were thus handed down from one generation to another, without being committed to writing, were called traditions, and were regarded by the Jews as even more sacred than the written law.

Herbert. What did Christ say to them?

Mrs. L. To convince them that their elders were erring men, and that their traditions were not to be depended upon, he asked them, Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

Herbert. Did he mention any instance in which they did this?

Mrs. L. Yes, God had expressly said, children must honor their parents; but their traditions said, a man could not better dispose of his money than to give it to the priests; and many, who had poor parents, who were suffering for the necessaries of life, would neglect them, and bestow their money upon the priest, and for the service of the temple. Christ told them, God commanded, saying; Honor thy father and thy mother; but ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mayest be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. That is, if they gave their money for religious purposes, they should be free from any obligation to keep God's commandment.

This Christ called, making void the law of God by their traditions. But children, God will not permit you to put any duty in the place of honoring your parents.

Edward. And what is it to honor our parents?

Mrs. L. It is to love them, to obey all their commands, unless they should command you to sin against God; to obey them, whether they see you or not, for God always sees you, and he will know of your disobedience, if your parents do not. It is to avoid hurting their feelings by any improper conduct whatever, and to assist them in every possible way. A child cannot please God, who does not honor his parents. God will accept no duty in the place of this.

Herbert. I should think every child would pray God to help him to keep this command; for we never can do as much for our parents as they have done for us.

Edward. Can't we? I never thought of that.

Mrs. L. Did you ever think, Edward, who took care of you, when you was an helpless infant; who watched over you in sickness; who has instructed, clothed and fed you all your life?

Edward. (*Bursting into tears.*) Oh, it was my mother, and how little I have thought about it. Do you think that she can forgive me that I have loved her so little?

Mrs. L. I think, my dear, that you *have* loved your mother; though I dare say you have not been sensible how much you owed her. I hope this conversation will do you good; but you must remember that it is of no consequence to hear what is right, unless it makes us do as we ought. And it will from this time be your duty to be more obedient to your parents, and more careful not to offend them; for when you disobey them, you sin against God. But it is time we returned to our story.

Herbert. How did the Scribes and Pharisees like what our Savior said to them.

Mrs. L. They were offended; for our Lord told them plainly, that they thought too much of worldly things; and that they taught the commandments of men for the truth of God. From thence, we are told, our Savior came to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. Where are they, Edward?

Edward. In the western part of Galilee, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea.

Mrs. L. A woman from that region came to Jesus begging mercy for a daughter, who was vexed with a devil. Our Lord permitted her to repeat her question a number of times, before he noticed her; but notwithstanding his apparent indifference to her wants, she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs. But she said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs may eat of the crumbs that fall from their Master's table. Then Jesus commended her faith, and her daughter was made whole from that hour.

Herbert. Why was the Savior so slow to hear the woman?

Mrs. L. God always chooses the best time to bestow his mercies, my son. I have related this fact, that you may see what he expects from his children. This woman was a Gentile; and yet, while the Jews would not receive the promised Messiah, she was ready and willing to worship him as the Son of David. Christ saw that her heart was right; but probably he wished to bring her faith (or belief in him) into exercise, for her own comfort, and also for the sake of all around her. It is so at the present day. God often tries those, whom he loves, lets them

ask many times and wait long for the blessings they desire. If these are spiritual blessings, we should never cease asking till we receive. God is not weary with his children's prayers; but often, when he seems indifferent, his heart is full of love, and in his own best time he answers their requests.



LECTURE X.

Christ at Magdala—He foretells his sufferings—His transfiguration—Teaches his disciples humility—Sends out the seventy—Feast of tabernacles.

EDWARD DWIGHT was the son of Mrs. Lyman's eldest sister. He was two years younger than his cousin Herbert, in whose company, however, he took great delight; and when the time came for him to return home, he desired very earnestly to remain awhile longer; not only that he might have his cousin's company, but that he might also pursue the scripture lessons, and hear the Parlor Lectures. Accordingly his aunt wrote to his mother, requesting that he might be permitted to prolong his visit.

Here aunt, said Edward, skipping into the room; here is a letter for you, and I don't doubt it says I may stay these two months. Mrs. Lyman broke the seal, and soon told him that he was right. It was from his mother, and she did give him permission to make a long visit.

Well, said he, I am very much pleased; and as I do not wish to waste one moment of my time, if you are not going to tell us of our Savior's history, I will get my sabbath school book. I am quite at liberty, replied Mrs. Lyman, and will attend to you with pleasure.

Mrs. L. We left our Savior doing good on the borders

of the Mediterranean. From that region he crossed the country, and came to the sea of Galilee.

Edward. The same that is called the lake of Gennesareth sometimes.

Mrs. L. Yes.

Edward. I know where that is. We have looked at it two or three times.

Mrs. L. Here the blessed Lord, who truly went about doing good, healed the lame, opened the mouths of the dumb, gave sight to the blind, and again fed a multitude by a miracle; seven loaves and a few small fishes being more than enough for four thousand. And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came to the coast of Magdala. Where is that, Herbert?

Herbert. East of Jordan, near the sea of Galilee.

Mrs. L. Then came the Pharisees and Saducees, and tempting him, desired that he would show them a sign from heaven.

Herbert. What did they mean?

Mrs. L. They meant that he should work some miracle, by which they could know that he was the Messiah.

Herbert. Did they really wish to be convinced, mother?

Mrs. L. No, I think not. They did not manifest any thing of a humble, teachable spirit. They certainly had witnessed many miracles, and had seen that no man could do them, unless God were with him. They wished to tempt and ensnare Christ.

Herbert. What did he say to them?

Mrs. L. He plainly told them they were hypocrites; and added, they could tell by the appearance of the sky what the weather would be, and inquired, Can ye not discern the signs of the times?

Edward. I don't know any thing what that means, aunt. Do you, Herbert?

Herbert. Why, mother has explained the bible a great deal to me, and I ought to know; but perhaps I do not. The signs of the times; does not this relate to what had been foretold about Christ's coming?

Mrs. L. Yes, my dear. The sceptre was now departing from Judah, and other prophecies showed this to be the time, when the promised Messiah should come. And it was a shame for those, who made pretensions to learning, like the Scribes and Pharisees, to be so wise about small things, like the face of the sky, or the changes of the weather, while they neglected those important concerns, on which their everlasting happiness depended.

Edward. O I wish I knew about the prophecies.

Mrs. L. You are too young to know much about them; still, if you will read your bible with care, always remembering to ask God to help you to understand it, you certainly will learn a great deal; though the bible is so full of instruction, that the greatest of men will always have something to learn.

Herbert. I did not know that, mother, I thought you knew all about it.

Mrs. L. O no, my son, I am but a babe in knowledge; though as I know more than you do, I shall be very glad to assist you daily; for it is our duty to be constantly searching the scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation.

Edward. What did Christ say to the people?

Mrs. L. He immediately left them and departed. Christ will not stay with those, who treat him with contempt. Beware, children, how you think lightly of the Savior, or undervalue that precious blood, that was shed

for you and for me, lest it be found in the day of accounts, that you have no part or lot in the matter. After this, in Bethsaida, Christ healed a blind man; and conversing with his disciples upon the opinions that different people had of him, he asked what *they* thought. Simon Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.

Herbert. Yes, and Christ called him blessed, because flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him.

Mrs. L. It was truly so, my son; and blessed are all, who know Christ; that is, who know by experience that he can wash away our sins, and cleanse us from our guilt. But flesh and blood do not thus show Christ to us. That is, if we believe aright on him, it must be by the Holy Spirit helping us. No matter how young children are, who seek to know Christ. No matter how ignorant, if they seek aright. God will teach, and bless, and save them, making them happy in his kingdom.

Edward. What next, aunt?

Mrs. L. From this time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests and scribes, and be killed and raised the third day.

Herbert. Was this new to the disciples?

Mrs. L. Yes, for though Christ had given some intimations of what he would do, he never had fully explained himself.

Edward. What did they say?

Mrs. L. Peter, who was a man of warm, ardent feelings, and always more ready to speak than to reflect, answered; Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall never be to thee.

Herbert. As if he knew better than his master.

Mrs. L. But Christ answered, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me.

Herbert. Mother, why did Christ call Peter, Satan? Don't you think he meant well though he was ignorant?

Mrs. L. If Christ did not thus suffer, none of the fallen race of Adam could be saved. We may suppose that Satan would gladly hinder their salvation, and perhaps he put such thoughts into the mind of Peter. He would thus employ Peter as an instrument to tempt the Savior, as if the scene, through which he told them he was to pass was too dreadful to be endured. This sudden, and apparently severe rebuke, would teach Peter, that he knew little yet as he ought to know respecting the nature and design of our Savior's mission into the world. He did not as yet, seem to understand, that without shedding of blood, there could be no remission (or pardon) of sins.

Then Jesus taught the necessity of taking up the cross; that is, those, who would be his children, must not indulge their sinful inclinations. They must do their duty, however hard or painful, or they could be none of his. And he added this solemn question. What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? And, children, the question is just as important now, as it was when it was first proposed; just as important to you, as it was to the disciples. And oh, that you would think well upon the subject. What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.

Six days after this, Jesus took Peter, James and John, and went with them to a high mountain, and was transfigured before them.

Herbert. Transfigured? I do not understand you.

Mrs. L. We are told his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment, (or clothes) was white and glistening; by

which we may suppose there was something uncommonly brilliant in the appearance of Christ; that though his body kept its usual form, its whole appearance was changed to something, that showed as much as the disciples were able to bear of the glory that dwelt in Christ. Probably we get but faint ideas of the appearance, and of the glory that shone around; but the apostles saw it, and were undoubtedly strengthened by it, in some measure to bear the death of their divine Lord and Master.

Herbert. Is it not said that Moses and Elias talked with him.

Mrs. L. It is.

Edward. Moses was the Jewish lawgiver; but who was Elias?

Mrs. L. He was one of the most eminent of the prophets, who was carried to heaven in a chariot of fire without dying. Very likely he appeared in his glorified body. What the appearance of Moses was we cannot tell.

Herbert. Why should they appear to Christ?

Mrs. L. To converse with him respecting his death, which was to take place at Jerusalem, and to show to the apostles the character of Christ.

Herbert. Were they comforted, mother?

Mrs. L. Undoubtedly their trust in God was more firm; and they rejoiced when they saw such displays of his glory; for Peter said, It is good for us to be here. Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias. This undoubtedly Peter said, because he was very happy. Peter was one, who often spoke without a great deal of thought. It is said by the evangelist on this occasion, that he wist not what he said.

Herbert. Did not the rest of the apostles know about the transfiguration of Christ?

Mrs. L. No. The Savior commanded that it should be kept secret, not wishing it to be known publicly till after his death. Then they went down from the mountain, and Jesus cast out a deaf and dumb spirit, and once more foretold his death and resurrection.

Herbert. Did not all these things make the apostles very pious?

Mrs. L. The apostles were certainly good men, still like you and me they possessed depraved hearts as their conduct would often render manifest. I can give you an instance of it. When our Lord was at Capernaum with his disciples, he inquired what they had disputed about upon the way.

Edward. Did not Jesus know?

Mrs. L. O yes; but he thought proper to ask them; for they had disputed on the way as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Edward. What, these good men dispute as to who would be the greatest in heaven!

Mrs. L. Yes, my child; but these good men had very imperfect ideas of what the kingdom was, which Christ came to provide for them. They thought it was an earthly kingdom, and were ambitious of having the honors, which they supposed Christ would give to his favorites. But he had no rewards for such a temper. Setting a little child before them, he instructed them that he expected meekness, humility and a child-like temper in his disciples.

He then reasoned with them upon the great truths they had received from him; and told them that if a hand or a foot offended, it was better that it should be cut off than

that the whole body should be cast into hell. By this he meant that they must be careful to put away all sin. It is so now, dear children. If you cherish sin, you can have no inheritance in heaven; but if you mourn over, strive against and renounce it, Christ will own you as his in a brighter and better world. You recollect that Christ chose twelve disciples, perhaps to correspond with the number of the twelve patriarchs.

Herbert. Yes, and sent them forth by two and two.

Mrs. L. In like manner he sent forth seventy others, to whom he gave power to heal the sick, and perform miracles in his name.

Herbert. Why did he choose just seventy?

Mrs. L. We are told in Exodus that seventy elders went into the mount to see the glory of God displayed. The same number being now chosen reminds us of that circumstance, though it is not said there was any reference to it.

About this time the brethren of our Lord urged him to exhibit himself more publicly to the world: for they did not believe on him.

Edward. I did not know that Christ had any brothers.

Mrs. L. We do not know with certainty who are meant by his brethren in this place. Perhaps the children of Joseph and Mary; or they might be some more remote connexions. There would soon be an opportunity for him to exhibit himself publicly, as the feast of tabernacles was about to take place at Jerusalem, and they earnestly desired that he would go up to it.

Edward. What was the feast of tabernacles?

Herbert. Why, don't you know, Edward?

Mrs. L. My son, why are you impatient. You know Edward was not here when we went through with the Old

Testament; and I shall be as happy to tell him now as I was to tell you then.

Edward. Thank you, aunt; you are very kind. And so is Herbert, but I suppose he is in a hurry to get along.

Herbert looked hurt. He meant no harm, and in a moment it was all forgotten; while Mrs. Lyman explained the feast of tabernacles.

The feast of tabernacles was kept in the seventh month. It began on the fifteenth day of the month, and continued eight days. On the first day the Jews cut down branches of palm trees, willows, and such other trees as were well supplied with leaves, and made themselves tabernacles to dwell in during the feast.

Edward. And what should they do that for?

Mrs. L. The solemnities of this feast were intended to bring to their remembrance the time when Israel dwelt in the wilderness, which you know they did forty years. It was likewise intended to represent the fertility of the land of Canaan, which God had given them. On the last day of the feast, the people were accustomed to draw water from the pool of Siloam, which was close by the walls of Jerusalem; some of it was drank with loud expressions of joy, and the rest was brought to the altar, and poured upon the evening sacrifice. During this part of the ceremony, the people used to sing the twelfth chapter of Isaiah's prophecy; particularly the third verse; With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation. Upon each day they offered various sacrifices, calculated to help them feel their own sinfulness, while they rejoiced in the goodness of God.

But I was telling you of our Savior. When his brethren urged him to be more public in performing his miracles, he refused to go up to Jerusalem, and he did not

intend then to go up to the feast. But about the midst of the feast, he went up to Jerusalem, entered the temple, and taught. The Jews were greatly astonished, saying, How does this man know letters, having never learned? They could not tell how it was, that Jesus should possess such wisdom, when they knew he had never enjoyed any public opportunity for making those attainments, which he possessed.

Edward. How should he have known so much?

Mrs. L. He possessed the Holy Spirit without measure. This was a time, when the Romans had made great advances in education, and a high value was set upon learning, both among them and the Jewish church. They were capable of judging when one excelled; and they could not but see the excellency of Christ, though they neither loved him, nor the doctrines he taught. His enemies had been seeking him that they might take his life; here he appears openly, and thus shows them that he does not fear their power.

Herbert. I suppose they did not once think, when they offered the sacrifice, that the Savior had come.

Mrs. L. The great Sacrifice, which once offered, there needeth no more shedding of blood.

Edward. I don't see how they could help believing, when Christ did so many mighty works.

Mrs. L. They were certainly slow of heart to believe. But children, my attention is needed elsewhere, so I must leave you for the present.

LECTURE XI.

The seventy return—The lawyer and the good Samaritan—Christ visits Martha and Mary—The Lord's prayer.

AFTER Mrs. Lyman had made some necessary arrangements for her family, she returned to the parlor, intending to spend an hour or two with a book. But little Edward looking earnestly at her, ventured to ask if she should tell them any thing more about the Savior. Herbert was older; and as he knew his mother devoted a great deal of time to them, he would not have asked for more. However, Edward was young, and his aunt only smiled, and laying aside her book, sat patiently down to interest her young charge.

We left our Savior at the feast, said Edward; and what was further done?

Mrs. L. He had a great deal of conversation with the Jews respecting himself, and some believed on him; but many of them understood but little of what he meant, and would have stoned him, but he conveyed himself away, for his hour was not yet come.

Herbert. Did he explain any thing of the manner of his death?

Mrs. L. He spoke of the Son of Man's being lifted up; alluding, no doubt, to his being lifted up upon the cross. But I cannot relate to you all the particulars of the conversation. You will find it in the seventh and eighth chapters of John.

After this the seventy disciples who had been sent out returned with joy, and told Christ that even the devils were subject to them through his name.

Herbert. Now they saw the power of him, in whom they had believed.

Mrs. L. Yes, but Christ told them not to rejoice that spirits were subject to them; but rather to rejoice because their names were written in heaven. Then he said to them privately, that prophets and kings had desired to see what they saw, and had not been allowed the privilege.

Edward. O how the disciples were favored.

Mrs. L. And O how we are favored, Edward. We see even more than the disciples saw. We see the religion of this persecuted Jesus spread, flourish and extend; widening and diffusing itself every year. We know more perfectly the way of salvation through Christ, have clearer views of the plan of gospel grace, and know that his kingdom is indeed, not of this world; that a belief in his religion offers far more happiness than could ever be gleaned from this fading scene.

Edward. I did not once think of that aunt. We *are* favored.

Mrs. L. We are favored with light and knowledge. If we improve, we shall rejoice in the light through eternity. If we neglect it, it would have been far better for us had we never known the gospel.

After a little pause, Mrs. Lyman resumed her story.

A certain lawyer came to Christ with a desire to find fault, and tempt him to say that, which would expose him to censure. He asked, What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Edward. What, such a lawyer as uncle George?

Mrs. L. No, dear; the lawyers of that age were only acquainted with the laws of God; and their business was to explain the pentateuch, or five books of Moses.

Herbert. What did Christ say to him?

Mrs. L. He referred him to the law, and asked him what was written there? The lawyer answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. Our Lord replied, thou hast answered right. This do, and thou shalt live.

Herbert. But mother; in what part of the law are these words found?

Mrs. L. Those that enjoin love to God are found in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy; and those, that enjoin love to our neighbor, in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus. Now Christ knew that the lawyer was far from doing this; so far that he did not even understand what the law required. He however, had no such humble opinion of himself. He had been attentive to outward ceremonies, and with that rested satisfied. Thus self-complacent, he asked, Who is my neighbor? Then Jesus related the story of the good Samaritan.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him;

and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves? And the lawyer said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Edward. Is this a true story, aunt; or a parable?

Mrs. L. It is thought by some to be a true story; probably it was. To understand it fully, it is necessary to consider that the priest and the Levite were both attached to the service of the temple; and it was their business, in a peculiar manner to understand and practice the commands of God. Yet they passed by, and left a Jew, one of their own nation, to perish. From them we might have expected kindness.

Herbert. But not from the Samaritan; for the Jews were the enemies of the Samaritans, and would not notice or converse at all with them.

Edward. I don't understand that.

Herbert. Well, I will tell you about the Samaritans sometime, if you will hear mother now. She has told me about them.

So Edward consented, and Mrs. Lyman proceeded to tell them that we were instructed by this story to do good to all mankind; even to our enemies, if we have opportunity. God, she said, will not allow us to cherish a revengeful, unforgiving temper. If we do, we cannot be his children.

Herbert. I wonder what the lawyer thought.

Mrs. L. He *might* have thought that the traditions of the Jews led them away from the laws of God; for the Jews explained their neighbors to be their relatives, or those belonging to their own nation, and had no idea of doing good beyond that circle. But how differently will

the really pious person feel. So far from turning away when an object of charity presents, he will search out the needy, for he loves to do good.

Edward. I believe my mother does so, but I don't know certain. I have always minded that she put her money in two purses; and when any one wanted to help the missionaries, or any such thing, she always went to the *bead* purse, and never said she had no money.

Herbert. Do you always have money, when you want it?

Edward. Not to spend for what I like. 'Ma tells a great deal about how the poor suffer for fire and food; and because she always knows, I guess she hunts them up herself. But I don't know. I *never* heard her tell what she did. But we don't spend much money for toys; for 'ma says it is a great deal better to do good with it. Aunt, is not 'ma like the good Samaritan?

I think she is, replied Mrs. Lyman, with a smile; and I hope she will train up her children to walk in her steps. For the scriptures tell us; Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will strengthen him on a bed of languishing. But is there nothing else to be learned from the story?

Herbert. I do not know that there is.

Mrs. L. It should lead us to reflect upon the strictness of the law of God, and the numberless times that we transgress perhaps, without knowing it. How then can we be saved? for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.

Edward. Does it say so in the bible? What can we do, aunt? Is not the law too strict?

Mrs. L. The same blessed book informs us, that the law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Edward. But what can we do?

Mrs. L. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He has honored the law by obeying it perfectly; and now, if we look to him, and trust in his merits, while we daily watch and strive and pray to be delivered from sin, God, for his sake will accept us.

Edward. How much the Savior has done for us. I wish I could think more about it, and feel *so sorry* for my sins.

Mrs. L. Pray that you may, my child; though you can never sorrow aright, unless God sends his Spirit to convince you of sin. We can do nothing without the Holy Spirit to guide us in the way of duty and obedience. But to proceed with our history. We next hear of Christ at the house of Martha.

Herbert. Where was that, mother?

Mrs. L. In Bethany. Do you know where that was?

Edward. South east of Jerusalem. Martha's house; was she married?

Mrs. L. Martha seemed to be at the head of the family. She might have been a widow. She had a sister Mary. These women were pious; for it is said in another place, that Christ loved them.

Edward. He went there to make a visit; didn't he aunt?

Mrs. L. Our Savior was on a journey to Jerusalem. You have often been told that he was poor; had no house of his own, nor any of that wealth, that would purchase attention on his journey. He therefore turned aside to seek hospitality at the dwelling of these sisters.

Edward. Was Martha glad to see him?

Mrs. L. O yes; though it must have made her both trouble and expense to entertain so many, as it is proba-

ble the disciples were with their Master. We are told that Martha was cumbered with much serving; but Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word.

Herbert. The Savior was not pleased with Martha, was he, mother?

Mrs. L. He undoubtedly knew she was doing a great deal to entertain him; more, probably, than it was proper for a pious woman to do. For it is certainly wrong for christians to indulge themselves in luxurious living, while the poor have not enough to satisfy their hunger. Yet he did not interfere with her arrangements, until she asked him if he did not care that her sister had left her to serve alone. Then he said to her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful. What do you think he meant?

Edward. I don't know, aunt. Do you, Herbert?

Herbert. I was thinking whether he was not telling Martha that they—I don't know as I can tell now, mother.

Mrs. L. You were thinking, perhaps, that Christ was going to blame Martha for doing so much by way of entertainment, when it is so little that we really need. And that is a good thought. But by the one thing needful we are undoubtedly to understand *true religion*—the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Mary was listening to Christ's instructions, and he commended her for her having chosen the good part, which should never be taken from her. It is far better to think of God, read the instructions that he has left us in his word, and endeavor to know and do his will, than to have our hearts fixed upon any earthly good.

Edward. Did not Martha do right to entertain Christ?

Mrs. L. Certainly, my dear. All that seems to be wrong is, she appears to have made a deal of show and

parade about it, when she should have been more simple, and provided only what was necessary, that she might have had time to listen to Christ's instructions. So with us all. It is a duty to be industrious; but not a duty to let the things of this world take all our time, so that we have none to devote to Christ. You, my, children, are not old enough to have the business of the world occupy your time and thoughts, but its amusements, many of them vain and foolish, often engross the hour that belongs to God. There is *one thing* needful now, as much as when Christ was upon earth. And he knows as well whether you neglect it, as he did in the case of Martha.

Edward. But Christ does not visit us now, aunt.

Mrs. L. Not bodily, as he did in the days of his flesh; but he visits us, Edward, in a way to us mysterious. God is every where present. He knows the heart of every child. If it is fixed upon vanity, he sees it; and if it is humbly seeking to know the way of duty, praying to be taught by the Spirit of God, and desiring above all things to possess the one thing needful; O then he sees you; and is ready to repeat the condescending promise, They that seek me early, shall find me.

Herbert. Did not Christ teach his disciples to pray?

Mrs. L. Yes, my son; and his instructions to them are recorded, that we also might be taught how to pray. Unless Christ teach us by his Spirit, our prayers are worth nothing. God does not care whether you use elegant language in your prayers or not, if in your heart you desire to know and do his will.

Herbert. Then the Savior gave them the Lord's prayer, didn't he?

Mrs. L. Yes, and both of you have been taught to repeat it; but do you understand it?

Herbert. I don't think we do, mother. Will you please to explain it?

Mrs. L. Prayer, you must remember, is the strong desire of the heart, and not a mere form of words; and our minds should be filled with the deepest reverence and solemnity, when we come into the presence of God. Our Savior has taught us to say, *Our Father which art in heaven.* By this form of expression, he has instructed us in the duty of praying with and for others. *Our Father.* We are to come to him with the feelings of affectionate children, who greatly love to come into the presence of their parents. Still we must feel the deepest reverence; for though God is our Father, he is in heaven.

Herbert. O yes, and far above us. Holy angels worship him, and he has no need of our prayers.

Mrs. L. No, my son; God has no need of our prayers; but we have abundant need to offer them; for if God does not sustain us, we must certainly perish. Shall I proceed?

Thy kingdom come. Now you will notice, children, that after approaching God with reverence, Christ has taught us to pray first, that his kingdom may come; that is, that every body may become pious, the heathen converted, and all know and love God.

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Herbert. It would be so, if all were pious, wouldn't it?

Mrs. L. If all were perfectly holy, and obedient to the commands given us in the bible, it would indeed be a happy world. And well may we pray, and labor constantly for such a state of things on earth.

Give us this day our daily bread. Notice this portion, my children, and be instructed. It is not, give us riches, long life, or honors; but give us this day, *our daily bread*; that which will sustain us. It is not, give us an abund-

ance, but a supply for a day. By this we should learn to be moderate in our wishes and desires; not looking for great things, but being contented with a little even of that, which is necessary. What is next, Edward?

Edward. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Mrs. L. Our sins against God are called debts; and of these there is a great amount, which we cannot pay. Therefore we must come sorry for our sins, and plead with God to forgive them. But this we cannot expect he will do, if we ourselves indulge an unforgiving disposition. We must be ready to forgive those who offend us, if we would hope to find forgiveness with God.

Herbert. Lead us not into temptation. What does that mean, mother? God does not lead into temptation, does he?

Mrs. L. God suffers us to be drawn aside by our own wicked hearts, when we do not watch and pray, that he may show us our weakness and our dependence upon him. But you must remember that you are to watch as well as pray; and after you have begged of God not to let you be drawn away by temptation, it is your duty to avoid every thing that would be likely to make you sin.

Herbert. But deliver us from evil; and sin is the worst of evils.

Mrs. L. You are right, my son; and against that I pray that you may ever strive.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever, amen. You see how much of this short prayer is filled with desires for the glory of God, and what a very short space our worldly comfort occupies. Oh what need have we to abase ourselves when we come before God; and plead first of all, that he would pour upon us a spirit of prayer that we may use aright the privilege of coming before him.

LECTURE XII.

Hypocrisy—Covetousness—Intemperance—Feast of dedication—Christ restores the blind to sight—Laments over Jerusalem—Again teaches humility.

WHAT shall we do this evening, cousin Edward? said Herbert, as he laid off his cap and began to look about. Mother is not here, I see; so I suppose we shall have no scripture lecture this evening.

Not have a lecture! said Edward, showing the utmost impatience; not have a lecture this evening? I shouldn't think aunt would disappoint us so. Herbert smiled and looked up as if he wished to speak, but did not say any thing, until Edward asked him pettishly, why he did not speak if he wished to.

Why, mother tells me, said Herbert, that she instructs me in the scriptures that I may be better as well as wiser.

Well, don't you think I wish to be better? rejoined Edward.

O yes, I hope you do, replied Herbert; but mother says one of the first things we have to do is to govern our feelings. Now I hope you will not be affronted at what I say; but I thought you seemed impatient and fretful; and I knew mother would tell you, that you must learn to bear these little disappointments without such feelings, because the scriptures teach us to do so.

I did not think of that, Herbert, said Edward; I was wrong. Your mother spends a great deal of time with us; and what do we do for her? Upon this a tear stole down Herbert's cheek, for he loved his mother very much, and was grieved when he thought Edward ungrateful to her; but brushing it away, he said, You are right, Edward,

but here comes mother, this minute. Edward blushed, but Herbert had been too well instructed to speak of the faults of his companions to others; and after a little conversation, Mrs. Lyman began her lecture.

We last talked upon Christ teaching his disciples to pray; and we next have an account of his warning them against hypocrisy. What is hypocrisy, Edward?

Edward. It is when a good man forgets to be pious isn't it?

Mrs. L. Not exactly, my dear. A person is a hypocrite, who professes what he does not feel. For example, if one wishes to be thought pious, who does not love and serve God, he is a hypocrite. Of these there were a great number at the time when Christ appeared on earth; many, who would attend to the outward forms of religion, while their hearts were full of wickedness.

Christ likewise instructed the multitude not to be worldly minded.

Herbert. What did he say to them?

Mrs. L. He taught them by a parable. The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, what shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits. And he said, This will I do. I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said to him, Thou fool; this night shall thy soul be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

This parable was spoken for our instruction, as much as for the benefit of those who heard our Lord pronounce it.

Edward. What should we learn from it, aunt?

Mrs. L. We should learn from it not to set our affections upon any thing in this world; because if we have ever so much to enjoy, it is uncertain how long we shall stay here. Death may be very near.

Edward. Not to us, aunt. We are only boys, and shall live, I dare say, a great many years.

My dear child, said Mrs. Lyman, with great solemnity, do you think what you say? It was only yesterday you heard of the death of one younger than yourself. And if you will go into yonder grave yard, you will read the age of many a little child, some of whom doubtless expected long life as confidently as you do now.

Edward seemed pained.

It is true, continued Mrs. Lyman, we cannot tell but your days may be long; yet our Savior has warned us against just the feeling that you have. We should know that all things are uncertain, and be prepared for the sudden call that may summon us, in an unexpected hour, to the judgment seat of Christ.

Herbert. Isn't there any one in danger of thinking too much of the world, only those who are rich?

Mrs. L. O yes, Herbert; people may have strong desires after riches; and many, perhaps, spend as much time in planning how they may become rich, as the rich do in disposing of what they possess. But our Savior tells his disciples, Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

Edward. But aunt, is it wicked to think of these things? I always think a great deal about it, when I am going to have new clothes; and I think about it too, when 'ma makes us a plum pudding.

Mrs. L. Children, as well as those who are older, may be instructed from what our Savior said on this subject. Those who have families to clothe and feed, may spend too much time in thinking about it. The dying body is of small consequence compared with the soul, which lives forever. Though children have not these things to provide, they have them to use, and sin, whenever they take pride in dress; which may be known by their thinking too much about their clothes. All this Christ sees, and knows that it is contrary to his wise command.

Edward. Well, we don't take pride in the pudding, if we do think of that; do we?

Mrs. L. Pride is not the only source of sin. We can be intemperate in eating, and that will make us gluttons; and do you think that is no sin? Now thinking a great deal about nice things to eat, leads to this sin. Children as well as others should learn to be satisfied with plain, simple food; and of that to eat temperately. You may depend upon it, a glutton will never make a great man or a good christian.

Herbert. Wasn't it Johnson's life that aunt Elizabeth read to you last winter, mother?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear.

Herbert. You called him a great man; but I thought the evening that I heard you read, that *he* liked to have a good dinner very much.

Mrs. L. I am sorry to say you have remembered right; but I will tell you more about this great man. He was not like our Savior, meek and lowly, gentle and easy to be entreated; but he was easily affronted, would not bear to be contradicted at all; and in short was so unamiable that one cannot love him, great as he was. Now I have no doubt if he had eaten a small breakfast of bread and

milk, and taken a plain dinner with a very light supper, he would have been a far greater man; for then, I think, his temper would have been better.

Edward. Does it make people cross to eat too much?

Mrs. L. Yes, children in particular are fretful and uneasy, and they don't enjoy half as much as those do who are not always stuffing themselves with something nice. Now if you would not be a glutton, ill-tempered and sickly, and not live out half your days, you must not think it of any consequence to have something nice to eat. God wishes you to be better employed, and will never look down upon you with approbation unless you are.

Edward. I don't think but what you are right, aunt, but then didn't you say Johnson was a great man?

Mrs. L. Yes; God undoubtedly gave him very great talents; but I think they would have shone far brighter if he had been temperate in eating. I think too it was a stain upon his character, that will lessen the respect of the wise and good for his memory.

Herbert. I think I shall never be a glutton.

Mrs. L. I trust you never will, my son; but you must not be too positive; and you must remember to pray that God would help you to keep so good a resolution, for it is God alone that can preserve us from any sin.

But to return to the history. Our Savior, after having by a word healed an infirm woman, journeyed toward Jerusalem, to be present at the feast of dedication. He went through the villages and cities, constantly doing good.

Herbert. What was the feast of dedication.

Mrs. L. It was instituted in the year of the world three thousand eight hundred and forty, to commemorate the recovering of the temple from the enemies of the

Jews, the putting away of idols and dedicating it anew to the service of the living God. It lasted eight days, and was observed in the month corresponding with our December. The time was spent in singing hymns, offering sacrifices, and other expressions of joy and gladness.

It was at this feast Christ saw a blind man; and having spat upon the ground, he made clay and anointed his eyes, and immediately his sight was restored.

Edward. Why should he make clay? Couldn't Christ heal the man without?

Mrs. L. Certainly; but we are every where taught in the bible to be active. Something is to be *done* to secure to ourselves blessings.

Herbert. But we cannot merit any favor from God.

Mrs. L. Not the least favor; but that does not prove that you should not be active. Christ has taught us this, both by precept and example; and I would never have you lose sight of this truth, that God has formed you to be active in his service.

Edward. What did the people say to such a miracle?

Mrs. L. It was to be sure much talked about; and finally the blind man was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrim, to give an account of the matter.

Edward. Sanhedrim, what is that, aunt?

Mrs. L. It was an assembly of seventy or seventy-two judges, who were to decide upon the affairs of the nation.

Edward. What did the Sanhedrim say to him?

Mrs. L. This body seems to have been composed principally of Pharisees, who were enemies to the Savior; and they questioned the man, on whom the miracle was performed, very closely. And having learned that he was healed on the sabbath, accused Jesus of breaking

that holy day. They endeavored to persuade the man that he, who had thus broken the sabbath in healing him, must be a sinner; but not being able to convince him of this, they cast him out.

Edward. Cast him out from where?

Mrs. L. Cast him out of the synagogue; cut him off from the Jewish church, and did not allow him to be a member of the family of Israel.

Edward. Poor man!

Mrs. L. After all, he was not much to be pitied. He had been restored by the mercy of Christ to all the pleasures of sight; and when he was separated from his scoffing neighbors, Jesus found him out, and taught him that he was the Son of God. Believing in this Savior, the man worshipped him; and in this hour of worship and communion with his heavenly Benefactor, he enjoyed more than the world could either give or take away; and doubtless he finds his enjoyment eternal.

After this, our Savior gave his disciples much interesting, and important instruction. I am the door, he says. By me if any man enter in, he shall be served, and shall go in and out and find pasture. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth up his life for the sheep.

Then came the Jews about Christ, and said to him, How long makest thou us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus told them, I and my Father are one; and further explained to them his character.

Herbert. But did the Jews believe him?

Mrs. L. So far from it, my children, that they took up stones to stone him. Even then, instead of calling down judgments upon the unbelieving multitude, he mildly said, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of these do ye stone me? You will find in the

tenth chapter of John what our Savior said. I should love to tell you all, for indeed it is delightful to follow our dear Redeemer in all his lessons of heavenly wisdom. Who can help loving him?

Herbert. How *could* he lay down his life for those who were so thankless?

Mrs. L. Because he had the Spirit of God without measure. I can give you no other reason. Christ is now as desirous of the salvation of the fallen and the guilty as when he bled upon the cross. Blessed be God, he triumphed over death and the grave, and rose to plead his blood before the throne of his Father; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

Edward. Couldn't we have been saved without Christ's dying for us?

Mrs. L. No, Edward; nor will his death be of any service to us unless we believe on and obey him. And children, why should we not serve him, when he is so lovely in himself, and when he has done so much for guilty man?

Herbert. Did our Savior remain at Jerusalem after this?

Mrs. L. Not long. The opposition to him was so great, that we are told he retired beyond Jordan. But before he left the city, where he had received such unkind treatment, he gave another instance of that benevolence, that brought him from heaven to earth to suffer for his enemies.

Herbert. What was that, mother?

Mrs. L. Deep lamentations over the city, where he had received such unjust abuse. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy chil-

dren together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not. You notice what our Savior says, children; *Ye would not.*

Edward. Aunt, I don't think I understand that.

Mrs. L. Our Savior wished the people of Jerusalem to be pious, for he knew that only would make them happy. And he felt for them the care that a hen feels for her helpless brood. He would gladly screen them from every harm, if they would only come to him. But they were blind to their own interest, and instead of seeking protection under the shadow of his wing, they openly persecuted him. With tender expressions of kindness to his enemies, Jesus left them.

Edward. Aunt, isn't it very difficult to be so kind to those, who were always doing us harm.

Mrs. L. With our wicked hearts, Edward, it is truly difficult; but Christ did it, and he has never given us liberty to do otherwise. On the contrary, he has commanded us to love our enemies; to do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us. And he will never behold us with approbation, unless we do this.

Edward. Love our enemies! Why must we love them if they are wicked, and do every thing that is bad?

Mrs. L. We need not love what is unholy about them; still we must not wish to do them an injury, and we must be ready to do them good whenever it is in our power.

Herbert. Where do we next hear of our Savior?

Mrs. L. That he dined with one of the chief Pharisees.

Herbert. Why should the Pharisees notice Christ? They did not like him, did they?

Mrs. L. Perhaps for that very reason, that they might watch him, and find something to say against him.

Edward. Did they find any thing this time?

Mrs. L. Nothing wrong, Edward, though they found that, which they were willing to call wrong. The Savior seeing a man of the company afflicted with a distressing disease, healed him; and as it was on the sabbath day, the Pharisees accused him of breaking it. But they were silenced when he told them, that they would, to save their property, take care of the life of a beast on the sabbath day.

Herbert. I should not think they could say any thing, to be sure.

Mrs. L. The object of Christ in going into such society doubtless was to do good. With this object in view, when he saw every one seeking for the highest place, he spake a parable, in which he instructed them to be humble; not to seek to put themselves in the highest place, but to wait, and let others show them respect. For, said our Savior, whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. You understand that, don't you, Edward?

Edward. Yes, I think I do, aunt.

Mrs. L. Humility is a lovely trait in the character of any one, especially the young. They are all ignorant. They have lived but a few years, and know but very little, and nothing is more ridiculous than for them to suppose themselves wise. But it is generally the case that the most ignorant have the least humility.

Herbert. Did Christ give them any other instruction at this time?

Mrs. L. Yes, he told them that it was improper to make an expensive feast for the rich; and bade them,

when they made an entertainment, to invite the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind, and to look for their reward in heaven.

Herbert. How well every body would be taken care of if people followed the rules of the bible.

Mrs. L. That is a very just remark, Herbert, and it is, I think, a strong evidence that the bible was not the work of man, but that holy men wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Edward. What else did our Savior say.

Mrs. L. You will find a full account of his instructive conversation, in the fourteenth chapter of Luke. I should be happy to read it all with you; but you know I am every hour expecting your aunt Elizabeth, and I have some arrangements to make for her accommodation; so you will excuse me.



LECTURE XIII.

The prodigal son—Little children brought to Christ.

MRS. LYMAN was not disappointed in her expectations. Aunt Elizabeth came, and with her, her two eldest daughters, Emily and Catharine, one twelve and the other ten years old. Aunt Elizabeth was to spend the summer with her sister; her husband having taken a voyage to Europe, she thought it best to enjoy the society of her sister; besides she knew of the Parlor Lectures, and wished to have Emily and Catharine enjoy the benefit of hearing them. As that was one object of spending the summer with her sister, her arrival was no interruption.

On the second evening after they came, the cousins gathered around their aunt, and with great modesty and propriety, asked her to tell them about the bible; and Mrs. Lyman very kindly entered at once upon a lecture.

I shall commence with the interesting parable of the prodigal son. A certain man had two sons. The youngest had something of that uneasy, discontented disposition, which we often see in the young, especially in those who have been indulged, and not properly restrained by his parents. And he wished his father to give him whatever portion of his property he intended to, and let him travel. The indulgent father granted his request, and he journeyed to a distant country; and we are told he there wasted his substance with riotous living. After all his property was gone, the land was visited with famine, and the young man suffered for bread. In this distress he looked out for employment; and a citizen of the country sent him into his field to feed swine. Here he was so hungry that he would gladly have eaten husks with the swine; but no man gave unto him. Reflecting upon the situation of his father's household, and the plenty, that even his servants enjoyed, while he was perishing with want, he resolved no longer to suffer this, but, said he, I will arise and go to my father; and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. With this determination he commenced his journey; but while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him. Then the son made his penitent confession; but the kind father, instead of suffering him to take the place of a hired servant, treated him with the greatest tenderness, ordering for him

the best robe, and according to the manner of the age, desiring a ring to be put upon his finger, and shoes upon his feet, and directed to kill the fatted calf. And he said, Let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

The orders of the father were obeyed; and in the midst of their rejoicing, the oldest son came from the field. Unable to tell what could be the occasion of this unusual festivity, he inquired of some one, and having learnt, instead of joining in the general joy, he was angry, and would not go in. His kind father came out, and urged him to partake in the general joy, to which he answered, Lo! these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. The father replied, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

Catharine. What a kind father the prodigal had.

Emily. I have read this story, but it never seemed half so interesting before; because here is aunt to relate it, and mama, and sister and cousins to hear it with me. Don't we enjoy much more to be together?

Mrs. L. Those, who have social feelings do, Emily; and indeed I think there are few so morose as not to have their pleasures heightened by seeing that those around them participate in them.

Emily. Can't you tell us more about the prodigal?

Mrs. L. No, dear; I have finished his story; but perhaps I may tell you something that will help you to un-

derstand it. In the east it was customary as a mark of respect and attention, to give clothes to a visiter.

Catharine. But would they fit if they were not made for them?

Mrs. L. The dress of eastern nations was entirely different from ours. They had an outer garment, that was thrown over the shoulders, somewhat like a cloak, and when they journeyed, they tied a girdle about it, to keep it close. Such a garment our Savior might have worn, *woven without seam throughout*. And when they had not on this garment they spoke of themselves as naked, though they still had on their under garments. David is said to have danced naked before the ark; that is, without his outer garment. They were given by the rich to those who were poorer than themselves. I have read of a prince in the east, that had forty tailors constantly at work in his palace, that he might have clothes to give away.

Herbert. The ring too?

Mrs. L. That likewise was a customary token of respect.

Edward. But aunt, I should not think that even swine could live upon husks.

Mrs. L. They were not what we usually call husks; that is, what comes off from Indian corn; but are supposed to have been pods, growing on a tree called the carob-tree, which is still used in the eastern countries for feeding swine. But can either of you tell what instruction can be gained from the story?

There was a pause for a few moments, when Herbert answered, God is like the prodigal's father.

Mrs. L. Very true, and he wishes us to become reconciled with him. You, my children, are all like the prodigal son. God has given to you reason and conscience;

placed you in a land of bibles and sabbaths, and inclined the hearts of your parents to teach you your duty.

Catharine. And given us kind friends; yes, God has done all that for us.

Mrs. L. Well now, have you used these gifts in serving your Father, who gave them? or while enjoying all this profusion, have you wasted these gifts, by employing them in sin? All present seemed very solemn. They all felt that they had done nothing for that God, who had done so much for them. Mrs. Lyman added, Perhaps each one of you feels as the prodigal did, when wishing for the husks. You are sensible you are not in the way of duty or happiness; and I hope feel some little desire to arise and go to your Father.

Oh, said Emily, bursting into tears, but are we so wicked? Don't we *ever* serve God when he does so much for us?

I fear you never have done it, replied Mrs. Lyman, but you have every possible encouragement to begin this very day. God looks down upon every good resolution with favor. He beholds you afar off; and if you will but repent of your sins, and trust in Christ, even the angels in heaven will rejoice over you.

The children said nothing, but every eye was turned upon their kind instructor, and Mrs. Lyman continued.

The young have every possible encouragement to come to God, for he has said, They that seek me early, shall find me. O it is a lovely sight to see youth turning to God. How much misery will they escape, and how much happiness will they secure to themselves both in this world, and in the world to come.

Edward. Where did our Savior go after this?

Mrs. L. We have several parables, and other instruc-

tions given us by our Savior, which appear to have been spoken while he continued a guest with the Pharisee. However, it is not of any particular consequence where our Lord was, since we know the words of wisdom that dropt from his lips, and so much of his kindness, even to children.

Emily. What did he say of children? Do tell us that, dear aunt.

Edward. Yes aunt, please to tell us that, won't you?

Mrs. L. Yes I will, though in doing it I shall pass over much that is interesting. There were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray, and the disciples rebuked them.

Herbert. They were not willing Christ should notice them, were they, mother?

Mrs. L. The disciples saw that they were in health, and did not need healing; and being too young to receive instruction, they probably thought it would be troubling their master needlessly.

Catharine. Then what did the Savior say?

Mrs. L. Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them.

Herbert. Of such is the kingdom of heaven? Then if we die, we shall certainly be saved. Christ has said so.

Mrs. L. Not in this place, my son. The kingdom of heaven here means the church, into which children enter by baptism; and our blessed Savior suffers it to be so.

Herbert. I suppose you know, mother; but I don't see why the church should be called the kingdom of heaven.

Mrs. L. It is called the kingdom of heaven, because

it has a heavenly government, and laws. It is called so in the third chapter of Matthew; Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; that is, the kingdom, or church, which Christ came to establish on earth.

Herbert. What good will it do to be baptized, if we are not any better fitted for heaven.

Mrs. L. Give me your whole attention, children, and I will try to make the subject plain, for it is one, which you ought to understand, as you are all baptized children. God, you know, called Abraham to serve him. Now Abraham loved the Lord, and God gave him a promise that he would be his God, and the God of his children after him. Now this promise is called a covenant.

Herbert. But this was in old times, mother.

Mrs. L. It is true, it was a covenant made under a former dispensation; yet we are told in the epistle to the Galatians, which you will better understand as you become older, that this covenant is for all who believe in Christ. Your parents, children, all believe in God, and hope to be happy in heaven; and we wish, not only to have the comfort of religion ourselves, but to have our children become pious. We wish to take hold of the covenant for ourselves and our children after us, and we bring you to God in baptism; by which act we seal this covenant, or mark it for our own; that is, we promise to love and serve God ourselves, and to bring up our children in his fear, using all our efforts to have them pious. By baptism we make them, in a certain sense, members of the church; and thus you have an interest in the prayers that are daily offered for the church, and in the promises God has made to take care of it. Christ will never forget the lambs of his own flock.

Herbert. Well, I don't see as it is any thing to us. Our parents have to do every thing for us.

Mrs. L. No, Herbert, you are wholly mistaken there. It is but very little that we can do. We can bring you into the house of God, and into his church; and we can offer for you our unceasing prayers; but after all, you can never be saved, except you repent, and believe in Christ. So far from relieving you from your obligations to love and obey God, baptism doubles your obligations.

Herbert. Why, mother?

Mrs. L. Because you have great light and knowledge, compared with many others. You are religiously educated, and know the will of God. Now all these things double your obligations to him, who has placed you in these favorable circumstances. And now if you love the sinful vanities of the world, more than the service of God, miserable indeed will be your portion.

Catharine. But we don't know as God would love us, if we were to come to him.

Mrs. L. Can you doubt it, Catharine? What has our Savior said? Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. Come then, my little ones, this very day, come to Christ. He will look upon you with as much kindness as he did on the infants, whom his disciples would not encourage. Come, each one of you. O if your young hearts beat with one desire to serve this compassionate Redeemer, he knows it. He sees you afar off; and if you will only give him your hearts, he will love you; he will bless you, and make you happy, here and hereafter.

Emily. Are christians perfectly happy in this world?

Mrs. L. No, Emily; they are not, and for this reason, they are not perfectly holy. If they always did right,

they would always enjoy peace in believing. But they often sin, and bring darkness upon their minds. God does not comfort them, and then they are very miserable; but when they return to duty, they are happy.

Emily. But this is not exactly what I meant, aunt. Do they not wish to have things, which they are obliged to give up, because they are pious?

Mrs. L. No, Emily; you may depend upon it they have enjoyments far superior to any the world could give. But probably they sometimes restrain their children from what would give them a momentary pleasure.

Emily. O yes, 'ma would not let us go to the dancing school, and I *knew* it would have made me happy.

Mrs. L. Only for an evening; and it would have taken off your mind from what was useful, and made you uneasy at home.

Catharine. And 'ma said we should not love our simple pleasures half as well; and so we were willing to stay at home.

Mrs. L. That is right. One of your obligations as baptized children is to take up your cross and follow Christ; that is, do things you do not love to, if he has commanded it. Go now, dear children, to the garden, and see the goodness of God in his works.



LECTURE XIV.

The rich man and Lazarus—Christ goes to Jerusalem—Is the Lord as well as the Son of David—The Pharisee and Publican.

THE family at the cottage had no great variety in their amusements; nothing of a public nature. Yet they were contented and happy. Occasionally they were indulged

with a ride; but their most frequent place of resort was the garden, where, having climbed a gentle acclivity, their situation laid open to their view the windings of the river Kennebec, here and there hidden by the forest tree. Herbert loved the spot, and had covered it so completely with the honey suckle and the woodbine, that it was a lovely retreat. Here the children were often found; and two days after the instructions to baptized children, they were conversing upon what had been told them, when Mrs. Lyman and aunt Elizabeth came arm in arm to the summer house.

Children, said Mrs. Lyman, you are invited to take tea at Mrs. Brown's. I was intending to give you a lecture. You can take your choice of amusements.

I think, said Edward, we had better go by all means.

But then, replied Herbert, I suppose you know you are the youngest; and perhaps you ought to hear what our cousins wish.

If aunt thinks proper, said Emily, I should like the lecture.

And I too, said Catharine; O a great deal better than any thing else.

There Edward, said Herbert, here are three against one; but can't you like it too?

O yes, replied Edward, I can like it. You know I stay here to hear the lectures; and so I like to visit sometimes. But aunt, are you willing to spend your time for us?

Certainly, children, truly willing, said Mrs. Lyman. Upon this the children gave aunt Elizabeth and Mrs. Lyman the best seat in the summer house, and listened with fixed attention, to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate full of sores, and desirous to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed; so that they, which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, nay, father Abraham, but if one went from the dead, they would repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

Catharine. Did our Savior tell this story, aunt?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear.

Catharine. Then it is all true.

Mrs. L. Probably this is a parable, by which our Sa-

vior would show us the guilt and folly of self indulgence, and such worldly pleasures as the rich man enjoyed. But if there had been no heaven and no hell, Christ would never have spoken this parable. And if people were not in danger of thinking too much of this life, and too little of the scenes of eternity, Christ would never have spoken this parable. And children, were you in no danger, I never should have repeated this parable to you.

Herbert. What danger do you mean, mother?

Mrs. L. I mean that you are blind to your best interests, and are therefore in danger of endless misery. But would you only come to Christ, you have the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

But to proceed with the history of our blessed Redeemer. The time was drawing near when he should suffer at Jerusalem. He perfectly knew all that awaited him, but he shrunk not from the suffering. He stedfastly set his face as if he would go up to Jerusalem, because there he was to suffer. On his way he was to pass through a village inhabited by Samaritans; and as he probably wished for necessary refreshment, he sent forward some one to apprize them of his coming; but the Samaritans would not receive him.

Emily. Not receive a visit from Christ? Oh, how wicked.

Mrs. L. Yes, Emily, truly wicked; but are there no others, who refuse a visit from Christ? Yes, my child, every sinner, that loves the world better than religion, commits this sin. Emily made no reply, and Mrs. Lyman proceeded with the story.

The disciples were doubtless sinfully angry at this treatment of their Master; for when they asked if they should command fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans,

Christ rebuked them, and suffered no expression of displeasure. Blessed pattern! always meek, patient and forgiving, ready to do good to his very murderers.

Herbert. But why should the Samaritans be so unwilling that Christ should stop in their village?

Mrs. L. It is said, because he was going to Jerusalem. You know that the Samaritans did not love the Jews, or their temple or worship at Jerusalem. Christ was a celebrated teacher, and they doubtless were disappointed that he showed so much favor to the worship of the Jews. Perhaps, too, they might have been offended because he said to his disciples, Into any cities of the Samaritans enter ye not; evidently preferring the Jews, their temple and worship, to mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans thought men ought to worship.

Then Jesus passed on through another village, and arriving at Jerusalem, we first hear of him preaching in the temple: and such was the wisdom, with which he answered the cavils of the Pharisees and Scribes, that we are told, they durst not ask him any more questions. Wishing, probably still further to instruct the Jews, Christ in his turn proposed a question. He first asked them, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord? saying, (quoting a passage from the hundred and tenth psalm.) The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? This question was addressed to the Scribes, who were learned men, and whose employment it was to study and explain the books of the law.

Herbert. Could they answer it, mother?

Mrs. L. No, they could not. Can you, Herbert? You have all that is necessary for doing it in the New Testament.

Herbert. I don't know that I can. Will you point me to some passage of scripture, by which it may be made plain?

Mrs. L. There are many passages, which though they are clear to me, may still be above your comprehension. In the twenty-second chapter of Revelation, sixteenth verse, Christ is introduced as saying, I am the Root and the Offspring of David. You know that before the worlds were made, Christ was in the bosom of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with him. In this way he was the *Root* of David; and when he took on him our nature, he was David's son, his offspring.

Herbert. I always knew that our Savior had two natures, one human, and one divine. Didn't you, Emily?

Emily. No, I did not always know it, Herbert, for I did not always go to sabbath school.

Catharine. We always have understood a part of it, ever since we have learned to read. We have understood that Christ was the son of Mary, who was—was what, 'ma?

Aunt Elizabeth. Mary was a descendant of David, and thus Christ in his human nature became his offspring.

Emily. Thank you, mother; that is what I would have said, and what we learned at sabbath school. I shall never forget it, because it seemed so mysterious to me; and because we could not understand it. But aunt will talk if I don't say so much, said Emily, blushing. Her aunt kindly encouraged her, and Emily went on. In the first chapter of Genesis, it says, In the beginning God

created the heavens and the earth; and in the first chapter of Matthew, it says, In the beginning—

Catharine. No, dear sister, not in Matthew:—in John.

Emily. O yes, it was John; but aunt, won't you please to tell? Mrs. Lyman perceiving that the modesty of the child embarrassed her, went on with the explanation as follows.

In the first chapter of Genesis, it is said that God created the world. In the first chapter of John, it is said that all things were created by and for Christ. The knowledge of this mysterious fact explains what the Scribes could not comprehend; that as God, Christ was Lord of David; but when clothed in human nature, he was his son according to the flesh.

After this, the Pharisees inquired when the kingdom of God should come; for they knew perhaps that he had taught his disciples to pray, Thy kingdom come.

Herbert. Did the Pharisees know about the church?

Mrs. L. The Pharisees, probably, had no such views of the kingdom of God, as Christ would have his disciples possess. In common with the rest of the Jews, they looked for a temporal or earthly kingdom; and were anxiously expecting the time, when the power of the Cæsars should no longer extend over the favored people of God.

Catharine. The Cæsars, aunt? What, the twelve that we read of in Roman history, who reigned next after the triumvirate?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear, the same. Our Savior was born in the reign of the first, and crucified in that of the second.

Emily. The first emperor was Augustus, and the second Tiberius. Dear aunt, how pleased I am. Here

is Rome in the *boot*, as our Geography calls Italy; directly on the river Tiber. Here the Cæsars lived, and so proudly ruled the world. Look, Catharine; look, Herbert; here is Rome, and away there to the south east is Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, which was a Roman province. O, I am so glad I have studied Roman history, because now I know where I am.

Mrs. L. Or what is more to the purpose, you know where the Hebrews and the Romans were. But to return to the history of our Savior. While the Jews were thus anxious about earthly splendor, Christ told them, decidedly, that the kingdom of God would not come with observation; that is, there would be no show, no parade. But, he said, The kingdom of God is within you. It was to be a spiritual kingdom; Christ then told his disciples of difficulties they would have to encounter, and foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, which did indeed come, at last, with a fearful overthrow.

Herbert. What did our Savior next teach his disciples?

Mrs. L. That God loves to have his children earnest in prayer, and then he related the parable of the Pharisee and publican for the instruction of those, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself; God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Notice, my children, the difference between these two

men. The Pharisee comes, recounting his good deeds, telling God of his merits, and how greatly he deserves favor.

Herbert. But was he really so good? I have heard you say, mother, if we did things to be seen of others, God would not accept us.

Mrs. L. By no means, my son. God looks directly into our hearts; and where there is such a spirit as the Pharisee possessed, prayer must be an offence to the Lord. For we are guilty before God. He has commanded us to love him with all our hearts. Instead of this, we turn to the world, and expect happiness there. How little we think of the holiness and greatness of God; and how frequently we desire our own good, and think little of the glory of our Maker. With these sins clinging to our hearts, how proper it is that we should come with the lowly temper of the publican, and cry, God be merciful to us sinners. My beloved children, there is no other way, in which you can come and find acceptance with a heart searching God; and even this lowly temper will avail you nothing, if you trust in it. No, your repentance is no ground for confidence in God, unless with your whole heart you believe in the Savior. Unless you trust in his death, righteousness and intercession, you must be miserable. Children, have you ever thought of heaven? Have you reflected upon the perfect happiness that is laid up for those, who thus trust in Christ? It is what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived. Will you lose it, children? or will you seek earnestly, with the spirit and temper of the publican, for an interest in the blood of Christ?

Aunt Elizabeth. Heaven, my dear children, is worth seeking for. When pious people feel a little of this hap-

piness, it raises them above the world, and makes all earthly good seem hardly worth possessing. What then will it be to enjoy it in perfection, as those will, who shall enter the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and walk its golden streets. O that you would be wise, that you would consider this; for your life is but as a vapor that passeth away. After some further conversation upon this subject, Mrs. Lyman and aunt Elizabeth left the children, and went to visit a sick woman in the neighborhood.



LECTURE XV.

The young ruler—The nobleman and his servants—Christ raises Lazarus.

It was a bright morning in July when Herbert proposed to his mother, that the party at the cottage should spend the morning in a walk, and begged permission to be their guide. Mrs. Lyman consented, and Herbert, all life and activity, soon had the pleasure of finding the party following him up a long winding hill, deeply wooded upon each side of the pathway. A bright summer's sun was shut out by the overshadowing foliage, while the soft notes of the sweet songsters of the wood, sometimes mingled with the murmurings of the mountain stream; and sometimes were lost in the roarings of the little cascades, that not unfrequently varied the scene around them. At length they reached an opening upon the heights, from which they had a delightful view of the surrounding region.

Herbert knew the spot. It had often been made the scene of youthful gaiety. He soon led his mother and

aunt to a rude seat prepared under the broad arms of an aged oak; and placing his cousins as comfortably as his accommodations would permit, awhile they enjoyed the beauties of the prospect. Soon, however, a lecture was proposed; when their youthful voices died away; and with those feelings of reverence, with which they had been taught to approach the word of God, they resealed themselves, and received the following instruction.

A certain ruler came to the Savior with the inquiry, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, to inherit eternal life? Christ then told him of the commandments, which God has given as the rule of our conduct; but this young man seemed to have little self-knowledge. It is probable he neither understood the law of God, or valued the holy enjoyments of heaven. He answered, however, that he had kept all the commandments, from his youth up. When Jesus heard his answer, he said, Yet lackest thou one thing. Sell all thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.

Catharine. How glad the young man must have been.

Mrs. L. On the contrary, it is said he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Emily. What, left the blessed Savior for the sake of riches?

Mrs. L. Yes, my children; and I would that this were the only example of such folly. Perhaps there are few sins more common.

Herbert. What did Christ say to such a disciple?

Mrs. L. His benevolent heart was touched with compassion, while he exclaimed, How hardly shall they that have riches, enter into the kingdom of heaven; meaning that worldly good bound the heart to earth, and made it

extremely difficult for the prosperous to forsake all and follow Christ.

Herbert. Why then should people so earnestly desire earthly prosperity?

Mrs. L. Every one does not. The good Dr. Payson desired that if God had temporal blessings in store for him, they might be changed into spiritual good. But, my children, you will see few such instances. It is rare even for those who are pious, to look so entirely above this world. But Christ will give durable riches to all who possess this spirit. His sure promise is that they shall receive manifold more in this present life, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

I should be very much gratified to enter into all the particulars recorded of the life and instructions of our blessed Redeemer; but I find I have time but for a small part. Meanwhile I hope you are reading with some harmony of the gospels, and endeavoring to profit by the history.

Catharine. Harmony of the gospels! Pray what is that, aunt?

Mrs. L. It is a work by which we are told in what order events happened, in the life of our Savior.

Catharine. But can't we learn that by our Testament?

Mrs. L. No. We have not this history as it occurred in the order of time.

Herbert. That is, I suppose, it is not made plain when our Savior performed his miracles and other works; but the harmony shows us, after the turning of the water into wine, what was done next. We use the one in Wilbur's reference bible. Shall you tell us any thing more, mother?

Mrs. L. After the instruction to the rich man, a num-

ber of events occurred, which I shall not very particularly mention. About this time our Lord was informed of the sickness of Lazarus, a brother of Martha and Mary, whom he had formerly visited; and though it was a family he loved, for reasons which he did not see fit to communicate, he did not immediately visit them. He foretells that he shall suffer crucifixion at Jerusalem, gives sight to the blind, checks the ambitious mother, and dines with Zacheus, who only thought to see him as he passed. Finding as he journeyed about, that his friends expected the kingdom of heaven should come immediately, he instructed them by this parable. A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded those servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou, also, over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin; For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layest not down; and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou

knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury. And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. For I say unto you, That unto every one, which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Herbert. What did our Lord mean by this parable?

Mrs. L. Commentators upon the scriptures think that his object was to check the ambition of his disciples, who could not be persuaded that the Messiah was not to pre-
side over a temporal kingdom.

Herbert. Why should they be always stretching after such things, mother, if they were so pious?

Mrs. L. In looking back upon this period, Herbert, great allowance is to be made for the state of the world. All the nations of the earth except the Jews, were without any knowledge of the true God. To the little province of Judea alone was confined the worship of the Almighty, and the expectation of the Messiah; and even here all flesh appeared to have corrupted their way. They were under the government of a heathen emperor; and mingling as they did with the idolators of other nations, they became contaminated with their impure worship, and misled by their erroneous ideas. The deliverers, who had been raised up in the earlier period of their history, had rescued them from bondage to foreign nations; and desiring as they now did freedom from the Roman yoke,

it is not perhaps strange that they were slow to relinquish the hope of earthly good.

Catharine. It was a dark time, aunt.

Herbert. O yes. Mother says, for four hundred years no prophet had arisen.

Mrs. L. And in the century before only one.

Herbert. And that was Malachi.

Mrs. L. Yes, my children, even the apostles had the darkness of the age to contend with; for it seems their divine Master used no miraculous means to enlighten them into the knowledge of the truth.

Catharine. You say it was an age of ignorance, aunt. I suppose you mean only ignorance of the true God.

Mrs. L. That is all, my dear; the arts and sciences at this period were in a flourishing condition, and wars and commotions under the whole heavens, were hushed to rest, when Jesus the Savior appeared. But this state of the world has drawn us into a long digression. Let me return to the moral instruction to be drawn from the parable.

Emily. Moral? I don't think I understand that.

Mrs. L. *Moral* relates to the heart; while the discussion, into which we have just been drawn is of an *intellectual* character, and informs the understanding. By the nobleman our Savior is thought to have intended himself; and heaven was that far country into which he went, after having given his disciples gifts, abilities, and talents of various kinds, which they were bound to improve. These gifts, my beloved children, are not confined to the apostolic days, or to the immediate disciples of the blessed Jesus. They are conferred upon you, upon me, and upon all mankind, and our Lord bids us *occupy*. For the question will certainly be asked of each one of us, how

we have improved the advantages for doing good, with which God has favored us.

Catharine. Of me, aunt? Will this solemn question be asked of such a little girl?

Mrs. L. He, who has one pound will as surely be required to occupy or use it, as he, who has ten. You cannot do as much good as your mother; but even a child has no right to be idle, or selfish. That is laying up the pound in a napkin.

Catharine. But aunt, what could I do?

Emily. Do, dear aunt, point out some way, in which children can occupy.

Mrs. L. Can you not sew and knit; and above all, can you not save?

Herbert. William did not use to spend the money that was given to him, for himself; he always did good with it. And I have often known him cut wood, and weed the garden for a poor widow, who could not afford to hire it done.

Aunt Elizabeth. William is a good boy; and if he did it from a desire to obey God and do good, God will as surely accept him, as he does those who give great gifts; for it seems that he was always willing to do all in his power; and happy will it be for us, parents and children, if we follow his example.

Herbert. What event is next mentioned in the life of our Savior.

Mrs. L. You recollect I mentioned when he heard of the sickness of Lazarus. After this he remained two days in the place where he was. He then went to the house of his sisters, Martha and Mary, having previously told his disciples that Lazarus was dead. They lived at Bethany. Where is that, Herbert?

Herbert. About two miles east of Jerusalem.

Mrs. L. The affectionate sisters sent word to the Savior of the sickness of their brother, believing, no doubt, that he had power, if he were present, to heal him. Though they were undoubtedly pious, they partook of the ignorance of divine things, which brooded over the whole Jewish nation; for they appear to have not once thought it possible that he had power to call him from the grave. After some kind notice of the afflicted sisters, Jesus went with them to the grave of their brother. Sickness and death had entered a family, beloved of the Lord. It was the bitter fruit of sin. *Jesus wept.* The Jews seeing this evidence of his love, conversed awhile on his miracles, and inquired if he could not have caused that this man should not have died. Jesus, therefore, groaning within himself, cometh to the sepulchre. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. He ordered it to be removed, but even then, Martha could not believe. Jesus said unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?

Herbert. O what a moment for Martha and Mary.

Mrs. L. The Jews had often accused Christ of working miracles through the prince of the devils. To show them the sin of their accusations, and what was the spirit that moved him in his labor of love, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and calling upon the Almighty God as his Father, rendered thanks that he heard him. He then spake—and Lazarus came forth.

Herbert. Surely the Jews could no longer doubt.

Mrs. L. Many doubtless believed on him; but the chief priests and Pharisees laid the matter before the Sanhedrim. The miracle they could not deny; but they seemed enveloped in darkness, and fully determined not

to have this man to reign over them. They could not believe that God had sent him; and yet they found that his miracles had so turned the hearts of the people to him, that they were disposed to make him a king. This, they thought, would offend the Romans, who would come and take away their place and their nation. That is, they feared for Jerusalem, and their temple; and they took counsel how they might put him to death.

Catharine. What was the Sanhedrim, aunt?

Mrs. L. It was an assembly of seventy-one or seventy-two Jews,—Pharisees, Scribes and chief priests. Both civil and ecclesiastical cases came up before this body, though the Romans took away from them the power of inflicting capital punishments.

Emily. Civil and ecclesiastical? I don't understand you, aunt.

Mrs. L. *Civil* relates to the government unconnected with religion; *ecclesiastical*, relates to the church.

But now, my children, look about you, and enjoy for a little time, this broad stretch of the Kennebec, and these finely cultivated farms; for we must soon leave this delightful spot. The sun has almost reached its height, and a walk under a midday sun is no desirable thing. They accordingly feasted their eyes for a few moments, on the rich country that lay spread out before them, and then all the party was on the move homeward.

LECTURE XVI.

Mary anoints Jesus—Jewish mode of burial—Christ's entry into Jerusalem—He converses with the Jews—Widow's two mites.

FOR a number of days after the excursion to the mountain, parents and children were occupied in various ways, filling up life with activity and usefulness. Herbert had found time, however, to read over that period of Roman history, which comprises the reigns of the Cæsars; and when Saturday evening arrived, the children interceded for a lecture; and when Mrs. Lyman, after making some domestic arrangements, stepped into the parlor, all things were arranged by her busy little household, and in readiness for her immediately to commence.

We left our Savior where the Sanhedrim had condemned him as worthy of death. The public mind at this time seems to have been greatly agitated with this subject; and he, who came to lay down his life for our benefit, had abundant proof that it was indeed for his *enemies* that he suffered. It was his intention soon to lay down his life, and we are told by the sacred historian that he retired into the wilderness, and there continued with his disciples.

Meanwhile the Jews were making preparation for the approaching passover; and as they were at Jerusalem sometime previous to the passover, they sought earnestly for the Savior, that they might gratify their malignant desires.

Herbert. Did Christ remain in the wilderness?

Mrs. L. We are told that six days before the passover, he was at Bethany, and that there many of the Jews resorted, not only that they might see Jesus but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

Catharine. Were they at the house of Lazarus?

Mrs. L. It is said that a supper was made for Christ at Bethany; and though it seems to have been at the house of Simon, we are told that Martha was one that served, doubtless in honor of Christ. Here Mary anointed the feet of our Lord, and wiped them with her hair, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

Herbert. This was what troubled the covetous Judas, because the ointment might have been sold for three hundred pence, which is equal to about forty-four dollars of our money. I worked it out the other day. I suppose Judas wanted the money for himself.

Mrs. L. Probably, for he is called a thief; though he spoke under pretence of caring for the poor. But Christ did not censure Mary. He doubtless saw that she received him by faith as her Lord and Savior.

Catharine. What did Christ mean by saying it was done in reference to his burial?

Mrs. L. Perhaps he meant that after his death the Jews would look back upon this as one of the honors, which they thought indispensable upon the death of a great personage. Different nations have different customs. Among the Jews and Egyptians many spices were used at the burial of the dead.

Herbert. Were they laid in Coffins?

Mrs. L. No, dear. The Jews paid great attention to their burying places. Sometimes they had them in gardens, and sometimes in fields; and not unfrequently hewed a room in a rock, where the dead were laid as in a bed, with many precious gums and spices. This seems to have been their most magnificent mode. The remains of the pious were often deposited in some solitary spot,

where those, who lived after them would build an expensive sepulchre over them, and take great pains to preserve it in the best repair. To this Christ alluded when he said, Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.

Emily. Was it wrong to build these tombs.

Mrs. L. No, but it was wrong to make a great parade about any work of benevolence; and it is equally wrong, and equally offensive to Christ at the present day. Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. But we digress as usual. Our Savior, so far from showing any disapprobation, plainly approved of the kind office of Mary, and addressing himself probably to Judas, said, Let her alone; against the day of my burial hath she kept this. For the poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always.

You have lately, my dear children, seemed anxious to do good, and I have seen nothing in your conduct but what I approve. But God is greater than I am. Perhaps while you have been busied in this laudable employment, your hearts have swelled with pride, and you have exultingly said to yourselves, See what I have done; and have secretly taken pride when any one has told you it was well. Perhaps too you have had no higher motive than to be praised. If these have been your feelings, no reward awaits you. Your offerings are an offence to him, who requires the heart.

Tears fell fast from the face of the sensitive Catharine, and the deep solemnity that settled upon the whole party, indicated the strong feeling they possessed, and the sincerity of their desires to do that, which would be acceptable to God. But to proceed with the lecture.

Our Savior, who had need of a conveyance to Jerusalem, directed his disciples where they might find a colt tied; which the owner would willingly spare, when he knew the Lord had need of him. Thus prepared for the journey, they descended the mount of Olives. Do you know where that was, Herbert?

Herbert. East of Jerusalem, separated from it by the brook Cedron.

Mrs. L. Here the whole multitude began to rejoice, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works, which they had seen. In this spirit they drew near the city; and a very great multitude spread garments in the way. Others cut down branches of trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitude that went before, and that followed, cried saying; Hosannah to the Son of David. Blessed is he, who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the Highest. In the midst of this public testimony to his divine character, our Lord turned off his attention from the praise of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and wept over the fate of Jerusalem, foretelling its destruction. He spake on this occasion with the most affecting tenderness, though he had his death, so speedily to be accomplished, full in his view. And when they came to Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth.

Catharine. Why should they cast their garments in the way, and carry branches of trees in their hands.

Mrs. L. The palm tree was a symbol of victory; and it was customary to carry branches of it before conquerors. In this way the Jews acknowledged Christ; for the miracle he wrought in raising Lazarus from the dead, in-

duced many to acknowledge him as the expected Messiah.

Herbert. Where did Christ go when he entered Jerusalem?

Mrs. L. The first that we hear of him is at the temple; and here, as he did once before at the beginning of his ministry, he cast out all that sold and bought in the temple. Here too the blind and the lame resorted, and he healed them. Blessed pattern—constantly doing good, even to his enemies.

I cannot now follow our divine Master through all his works of mercy; or tell you of the many lessons of wisdom, which he uttered. I hope you will understand their connexion by the helps I have given you, and that you will be diligent in the study of your bibles. Now the feast of the passover drew near.

Emily. What was that, aunt?

Mrs. L. What was it, Herbert? Can you tell?

Herbert. When the Lord slew the first born of the Egyptians, he passed over the children of Israel; and in remembrance of his mercy, the feast of the passover was kept.

Catharine. In what manner was it kept?

Herbert. Mother told us about it in the Parlor Lectures on the Old Testament; and we can talk it over some time, when mother is not with us.

Yes, so we can, said two or three cheerful voices at once; and Mrs. Lyman went on.

Christ appears to have spent the day at Jerusalem, and at night to have gone to Bethany. Perhaps no one offered him hospitality. In the morning as he was returning to Jerusalem, he hungered; and when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing but leaves

thereon. And he said to it, Let no fruit grow on thee, henceforward, and forever. And presently the fig tree withered away. This fig tree is supposed to be "an emblem of the Jewish nation, which professed to worship God, and seemed to promise fruit; but when Christ came, he found none. They therefore fell under his wrath, and their profession and privileges withered away; nor have they produced any of the genuine fruits of righteousness, from his to the present day."

At the temple Christ resumed his conversation with the Jews, and at this time spake a number of truly instructive parables. All the bitter feelings of the hostile Jews were called up afresh upon this occasion; for they saw how the Lord condemned them. It was at this time that the Pharisees and Herodians came to him with a question, by which they hoped to entrap him. After a very respectful introduction, they inquired of him, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?

Emily. Who were the Herodians?

Mrs. L. They like the Pharisees were Jews; but on the question of rendering tribute to Cæsar, differed from those in the nation, who strictly adhered to the Jewish law, which forbade them to place a stranger over them as king. Herod, it is supposed, was a Jew; but as he held his honors under the Roman emperor, he would be likely to favor him. Influenced by the same feeling, the Herodians, or those, who adhered to the family of Herod, would naturally advocate paying tribute. Thus the nation was divided.

Herbert. How would answering this question be likely to entrap the Savior?

Mrs. L. Had he said simply, Pay tribute to Cæsar,

they would have accused him of being an enemy to the law.

Herbert. Yes, and had he obeyed the law, they would all have been in an uproar about his being an enemy to Cæsar.

Mrs. L. True, my son, and so with his usual wisdom, our divine Master, looking upon a penny, which bore the image of Cæsar, told them to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and to God the things that were God's. And it is said, they marvelled at him. The time which our Savior spent at Jerusalem previous to the passover, seems to have been devoted to works of benevolence, and to lessons of wisdom, to the various classes, by which he was surrounded. Being about to leave the temple, he sat down over against the treasury.

Herbert. Where was that? I don't remember any account of it in the temple.

Mrs. L. I do not certainly know, but think it probable there was a chest placed in the court of the women, to receive contributions for the support of the temple worship; and likewise for the poor and strangers. The latter is a class of people, towards whom the religion of the Jews taught the utmost kindness. And, my children, tenderness towards the stranger is no less a duty; no less amiable now, than it was under the ancient dispensation. Few situations are more painful than that of the stranger, who has left all the endearments of home, and long tried friends, for new duties, and new scenes. And if that stranger be a female, cold indeed must be the heart, and inefficient the religion, that would pass by regardless of her sorrows. In the synagogue, you recollect, there was a chest each side of the door; one devoted to the poor, and the other to the stranger.

Emily. What were you going to tell us about the treasury, aunt?

Mrs. L. That our Savior noticed the various gifts that were cast into it. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called his disciples and said unto them, verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all they, which have cast into the treasury; for she, of her penury, hath cast in all that she had, even all her living. This, my children, is an encouragement to you, and it is alike precious to me. God has given us no abundance; yet we, even from our narrow income, may give that which will be more acceptable to God, than the rich gifts of the wealthy.

Catharine. Then, aunt, I should think you would be thankful that you are poor, if Christ does not regard the offerings of the rich.

Mrs. L. You are mistaken, my niece. God looks not at the amount contributed; but at the feelings of the person who bestows the gift. And when the rich have humble hearts, and are willing to suffer self-denial, and are ready to give all that they can, then indeed they will find it a blessed privilege to have been rich. At the day of judgment, if not before, they will feel that they have acted wisely.

Emily. Where then was the advantage, which the poor widow had over the wealthy?

Mrs. L. I am very glad to have you pursue this subject, my dear; perhaps by so doing you will gain ideas, that will influence your conduct through life. The rich, whom our Savior noticed, probably did not deny themselves one comfort, perhaps not one luxury. They gave what they could spare as well as not. But the poor wid-

ow cast in all her living. She then had nothing for the supply of her own wants.

Catharine. Now, aunt, I see in what her goodness consisted. She was willing herself to suffer for the sake of doing good to others.

Mrs. L. You are right, Catharine; and the treasury of the Lord is filled with many such offerings at the present day. And Christ is still over against the treasury. He is every where present; and no offering dedicated to him or his cause, with a humble, holy heart, will ever escape his notice, or fail of a sure reward in a better world,



LECTURE XVII.

The day of judgment—Institution of the Lord's supper—Christ in the garden—Is betrayed and taken.

It had been arranged at the cottage, that every Saturday evening should in future be devoted to the lecture, and that there should be no deviation from this arrangement, till the lectures were concluded. Emily was engaged in ornamenting a watch ribbon with beads; Catharine was busily employed in giving the last touches to a watch paper, which she had painted with much neatness, to be sent to her Papa, while Herbert was folding a letter, that he had written to his cousin Edward, who was absent at school. So constant was the industry of these little children; go among them whenever you might, you would find them busy; and of course they were always cheerful and happy. Saturday afternoon was given to those light employments, in which children always take

pleasure. They were however laid aside as soon as Mrs. Lyman entered, who immediately commenced her lecture

The subject for this evening, my children, is of the most solemn character. Jesus Christ having given much instruction, perhaps the more firmly to fix it on the minds of his hearers, enters into a most interesting discourse on the day of judgment. With what awe and reverence should we follow him through that august account; for in this general judgment we are all interested. There will be no indifferent spectators of the scene. We shall all have a personal interest in it; and when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and the holy angels with him, and before him all nations will be gathered,—what a vast assembly!—from the infant of a day, to the man of grey hairs; yes, and from every kindred and every tongue.

Emily. Who is this Son of Man, that is on the throne?

Mrs. L. It is Jesus Christ; he, who was in the bosom of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with him. With one comprehensive glance he arrives at the whole character of every individual; and he separates the sinner from the saint with as much ease as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. His friends are placed on his right hand, and his enemies on the left, and this separation will be eternal. Each of you will be there, and there too shall I be. This is no picture of the imagination, but a solemn, an awful reality. Then shall the king say to those on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me, in prison and ye came unto me.

Herbert. But mother: our Savior could not say this to those, who have lived before or since he was upon the earth.

Mrs. L. Hear what he says; Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. The eye of the condescending Savior has followed every act of charity, from the foundation of the world to the present time; and even a cup of cold water given from love to God, will have a sure and certain reward. He knows every bible that has been distributed among the benighted nations of the earth; and he has noticed with a look of love every tract that the pious man has left, a messenger of mercy to his thoughtless neighbor. He has seen the vast collections that have been made to send the gospel to every creature; and no individual christian has ever smoothed the pillow of sickness, or sheltered the houseless stranger, without the notice of him, who will judge the world, and call every secret action into light, as well as every open deed, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Herbert. If God has noticed all these deeds of charity; has he not also seen the covetous and the worldly minded, and known that they have not taken pleasure in doing good?

Mrs. L. Yes, and we have the testimony of the Lord Jesus, that these shall go away into everlasting punishment. Then what imagination can follow them, or what tongue can adequately describe the darkness, horror, and misery, that through all eternity will engulf them.

Covetousness is not only a sin in itself, but it leads to many others. And I shall now have occasion to show you, that it led to the blackest crime, that was ever perpetrated by mortal man. Then one of the twelve, called

Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you. And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. This was the price of a slave, who had been slain by accident, that is, if the piece here spoken of was a shekel, which is valued at fifty cents. But it is of little consequence to us to ascertain the exact sum, by which Judas was induced to betray Christ. It was certainly sufficiently small to have been no temptation to any but an exceedingly covetous man. Christ had frequently predicted his sufferings and the fall of Jerusalem. Meanwhile the hour of his agony drew near. His disciples said to him, Where wilt thou that we make ready, that thou mayest eat the passover. Jesus directed them where to go, and bade them say, The master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples; and, he said, he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared, there make ready.

Emily. What is meant by the guest chamber?

Mrs. L. It was customary for the Jews, from different places, to come to Jerusalem at their solemn festivals; and it is probable that all, who could afford to do it, would set apart a chamber for their friends, who might be guests on these interesting occasions; and the furniture necessary would be but trifling.

Herbert. I suppose they did not furnish their rooms as we do now.

Mrs. L. No, dear. The eastern nations have their food placed upon mats, and while they eat, recline upon couches. But to proceed. And the disciples did as Jesus commanded. And they made ready the passover; that is, they prepared the paschal lamb, according to the directions given in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. The

passover was celebrated at the close of the fourteenth day of March. On the fifteenth day, the Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage. On the same month, and on the same day of the month, Christ was crucified, that those, who believe in him might be delivered from the bondage of sin.

Herbert. Was Nisan the same month as March?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear; though it was sometimes called Abib. Now the even was come, and he sat down with the twelve. And while they were eating, he said, Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me. And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and began every one of them to say, Lord, is it I? I seldom read this portion of scripture, without a deep sense of the humility and sincerity of the disciples. They were sensible their divine Master knew far better than they did the hidden evils of their hearts, and though not conscious of any thing but the most sincere desires to follow him, each one, in lowliness of heart, put the solemnly interesting question, *Lord, is it I?* How different from the general spirit of the world, where so many are ready to censure others, and so few are inclined seriously to look into their own hearts. Then Judas, in imitation of those, who were sincere, said, Master, is it I? He said unto him. *Thou hast said.* I have not time to dwell upon the probable feelings of Judas; but doubtless he felt something of those stings of conscience, that will ceaselessly torment the wicked in another world. But we will leave him, and speak of the institution of the Lord's supper.

At the close of the feast of the passover, the Savior broke bread, as an emblem of his body, which was about to be broken for sin; and poured out wine, as an emblem of his blood, so soon to be shed for the purifying of be-

lievers. And while he gave them the cup, he said, This is my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.

Herbert. This subject seems mysterious, mother.

Mrs. L. It does to me, my son; but it cannot be expected that we, shortsighted beings, should comprehend all the counsels of infinite wisdom. But we may rest assured every thing will be made plain, which it is really necessary we should understand. The work of Redemption, which was shadowed forth by so many types for four thousand years, was now to be completed. These types and shadows, which were as the morning twilight, were to flee before the beams of the Sun of righteousness. They were no more to be observed; for what they typified was now to be accomplished. As sacrifices were calculated to strengthen the faith of the pious in the coming Savior, so the Lord's supper was instituted to keep in remembrance this same Savior, and to give his children a simple memorial of him, who had laid down his life for them.

Herbert. And when our Savior had instituted this supper, he said, This do in remembrance of me. Oh, that I was pious, that I might obey this command.

Mrs. L. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out to the mount of olives. The feast of the pass-over was usually closed by singing one of the psalms of David. Many excellent instructions our divine Master continued to pour into the minds of his disciples who were still weak in faith, and imperfectly acquainted with the plan of salvation.

Emily. Had not they given up the idea of Christ's being great in this world?

Mrs. L. From many things they said, I should think

not. Soon we hear of our suffering Redeemer in the garden of Gethsemane; a pleasant spot, where it is probable he often retired for prayer. To this place Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee followed him. Overwhelmed with the deepest anguish, Jesus bade his disciples watch, while he poured out his prayers to God.

Catharine. Why was our Savior so sorrowful, aunt?

Mrs. L. I can only tell you what I suppose, Catharine, for we are not expressly told. From the character of our Savior we know he could meet as great sufferings with composure, as ever had been met by any one; and when we read how intense his agony was, we cannot but feel that he had sufferings in that awful hour, which were never felt by any other being. God had laid upon him the iniquities of us all, and his holy soul was torn with the most excruciating tortures.

Emily. Were not his disciples distressed too?

Mrs. L. Emily, in that trying hour, the disciples were asleep.

Herbert. Yes, Emily; don't you recollect how he came to his disciples, and finding them asleep, said, What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. And then when he was at prayer the second time, how they slept again?

Mrs. L. And then he left them to take their rest. Three times he prayed earnestly; and then coming to his disciples, he called upon them to rise, for he was at hand, who should betray him.

Herbert. Was it to this garden that Judas brought the multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests?

Mrs. L. Yes, and he gave them a sign; whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he, Hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail Master; and kiss-

ed him. Jesus inquired why they had come; though we do not find they acknowledged their purpose. He knew, too, that his disciples were weak in faith, and slow of heart to believe all that had been told them. Their Master had often foretold his death; and had also foretold that Peter would deny him. The apostle Peter was a warm hearted, zealous disciple; and when his Master told him he would deny him, Peter fearlessly answered, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Probably he remembered this engagement; and when the multitude drew near, he took a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Catharine. Was our Savior pleased?

Mrs. L. No, my dear; he ordered Peter to put up his sword, and reminded him that he could pray to his Father, who would immediately give him more than twelve legions of angels. But how then, he said, would the scriptures be fulfilled? O how should we constantly pour out our thanksgiving and praise to God for such a Savior, so ready to suffer all this for us; for as the scriptures assure us, Without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

Herbert. Mother, I do not see why this should be so.

Mrs. L. It is perfectly true that God's ways are above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts. I will try to illustrate it by an idea I borrowed from Griffin on the atonement. His exact language I do not recollect.

Suppose it is necessary for the prosperity of the English nation, that they should have a bank; and to preserve this bank, there must be a law against forgery, which if a person breaks, he must die. Ten noblemen break this law. Now if the king does not keep his word with them, what will the consequence be, Herbert?

Herbert. Why I should think that every rogue, who who wanted money would make it.

Mrs. L. Yes, and then the bank would go down, and the nation would be lost; and henceforth, no one would respect the laws of the king. But suppose the king had an only son, whom he dearly loved; and this son should come forward and offer to die. Would it not save a great deal of suffering?

Herbert. O yes, mother, because only one would die instead of ten.

Mrs. L. But the son of the king is his only son; and he would love him better than the whole number of the noblemen; and would not his death secure respect for the king's law?

Emily. I should think it would, aunt.

Herbert. So should I, mother. If the king would give up his only son, it does seem as if every one must see that they could not break his law without being punished.

Catharine. I should not think any one would ever dare to try counterfeiting again. But why did you tell us this story? I don't see what it has to do with the lecture, aunt; though I suppose it is all right, for I am but a little girl yet. Do you know, Herbert. You have heard a great deal more about the bible than I have.

Herbert. I think I know, Catharine. We are the noblemen, and our blessed Savior is the only son, who has died for us, that the law of God, our heavenly King might be honored.

Mrs. L. You are right, my son, and you ought to understand it; for it is our only ground of acceptance with God; and you, who have souls to save, should not be ignorant, that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.

LECTURE XVIII.

The Savior arraigned—Peter denies him—Remorse of Judas—Jesus condemned and crucified.

THE children were so much interested in the subject of the Savior's sufferings, that they requested Mrs. Lyman to proceed with her lecture, though she had spent as much time as usual with them. Yielding to their request, after resting a few minutes; she proceeded as follows.

We left our Savior surrounded by the murderous band sent out by the high priest; and while he reasoned with them, all his disciples forsook him and fled.

Herbert. Oh how cruel.

Mrs. L. Yes, my son, and altogether inexcusable.

Emily. What should have made them?

Mrs. L. Probably, when they saw Christ was about to yield himself up without resistance, they thought that they too should be taken as his followers. As I have told you before, their ideas of his character were very imperfect, and their faith very weak.

Catharine. Did the Savior go with the servants of the high priest.

Mrs. L. Yes, and they led him to Caiaphas, where it seems, although it was night, the Jewish Sanhedrim had to sit in judgment upon the case. And we are told that Peter followed afar off. This council, sensible that no evil was ever found in the spotless character that they had bound before them as a criminal, sought false witness against him; for among the Jews, we are told, it was thought lawful to say any thing against those who were considered false prophets, or those who led the people astray.

Herbert. Did false witnesses appear?

Mrs. L. Yes, but no two agreed in their testimony; and without this their law would not suffer any man to be put to death. At length two came, who testified that the Savior had said that he was able to destroy the temple, and in three days build it up again. This though not true had the appearance of truth, as he had spoken something that bore some resemblance to it.

Herbert. What did our divine Master say to these wicked men?

Mrs. L. Nothing, Herbert, until he was solemnly adjured by the living God to tell whether he were the Christ. Jesus then said to him, Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then they heaped upon the Son of God every indignity, which their wicked hearts could invent. Meanwhile Peter, who had mingled with the servants and strangers without, had three times denied his Master; the last time solemnly affirming with an oath, I know not the man.

Herbert. With an oath! Then he was not a christian.

Mrs. L. He was not in the exercise of christian feeling, my child; he was far, very far from the path of duty. The sins that he committed that night were awful; but such is the compassion of our God, that even such sins can be forgiven, if those who commit them are truly penitent.

Catharine. And was Peter?

Mrs. L. We are told that when the cock crew, Christ, who probably was then standing near him, turned and looked upon Peter; and he went out and wept bitterly. Peter loved the Savior, yet he sinned, for his faith was

weak. He probably trusted too much in himself; and therefore God left him to do as he liked; and when God does that to any of us, we shall certainly like to sin. This sin, followed as it was by repentance, probably made Peter more humble all the days of his life.

Herbert. What was done after this?

Mrs. L. In the morning, the murderous band led their innocent victim to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

Catharine. Did Judas follow him?

Mrs. L. The conscience of Judas seems to have been awakened, and he was made sensible of his baseness and guilt, when he found that the Master, who had treated him with so much kindness, was about to suffer the cruel death of the cross. And he repented of his sin, brought again the thirty pieces of silver, cast them down in the temple, and went and hanged himself.

Herbert. Then he could not have repented as Peter did, or he would not have hung himself.

Mrs. L. We have no reason to suppose he did. Judas had been a thief, and otherwise a sinner; but he seems to have no sense of the guilt of his past life. But to proceed. Jesus stood before the Roman governor, who inquired if he were king of the Jews. Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest; but when he was accused of the chief priests, he answered nothing; no reviling; no evil for evil. O how lovely does our Lord seem in every act of his life.

Emily. I think so too, aunt.

Mrs. L. What you thus love, you should pray that you may be enabled to imitate. I hope, my dear children, that you will study daily this blessed pattern; and daily pray that God would make you more like your Redeemer.

Herbert. O yes, I hope we shall, dear mother. I would rather be like my Savior, so meek, so patient, so good to all, even his enemies, than to have all the money in the world.

Mrs. L. Yes, my son; wisdom is better than silver or gold; and I pray that you may be more and more desirous of gaining it. It was customary at the feast of the passover to release a prisoner, such as the people should choose. Pilate, probably fully sensible of the innocence of Christ, wished the people to ask for his release. But they cried the more; Let him be crucified.

Herbert. If Pilate was convinced of his innocence, why should he not release him?

Mrs. L. I can offer no excuse for the conduct of Pilate; but the reason probably was, he feared he should lose his office and dignities. Tiberius Cæsar, who was then Emperor of Rome, was a jealous, cruel man. Besides, the government of Pilate was odious to the Jews, and they would gladly have made the Emperor his enemy. Accordingly when Pilate, after much conversation with Jesus, declared his belief in his innocence, and manifested a disposition to release him, the people cried out, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend.

Emily. Why should the people think that Pilate was not Cæsar's friend, if he let the Savior go?

Mrs. L. When Jesus was asked if he were king, he did not deny it, though truly, his kingdom was not of this world. You know that I have told you often, that the Jews expected the Messiah to deliver them from Roman bondage. If they could awaken the jealousy of Cæsar to believe that one had arisen, who claimed to be king of the Jews, he would at once fear losing them; and probably it was a source of wealth to him having the Jews

under his dominion. Though had Christ in reality, offered himself to the Jews as their king, they would have been the last to deliver him up. Probably the very thing, in which they were disappointed, was, that Christ would not interfere with their government.

Herbert. Is it not said that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod? Why did he send Jesus to him?

Mrs. L. Herod was ruler in Galilee; and Jesus, you know, was from Nazareth in Galilee. Pilate, who evidently wished to get rid of condemning him, sent him to be judged in the province in which he had lived. Herod returned him, without having discovered any thing worthy of death.

At length when Pilate perceived that he could not prevail, but that a tumult was made, and he was in danger of bringing upon himself the wrath of the Jews, he took water and washed his hands before them as a sign that he wished to be considered innocent of his blood. Having cruelly scourged him, and permitting him to be clothed with the mockery of dignity, in a purple robe, and crowned with thorns, he suffered those, who desired his death, to treat him with the greatest scorn and contempt. My children, my whole heart recoils from dwelling on this painful scene.

Then Jesus was openly condemned; and he, bearing his cross, went forth to a place called Golgotha, or the place of a skull, where they *crucified* him. Two thieves were crucified at the same time with him, one on each side. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross: *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.*

It was usual before any one suffered this cruel death to give him wine, with myrrh and spices, to render him insensible to pain. Some benevolent person had prepar-

ed this for the suffering Savior, but he refused it; while another, in mockery, offered him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall.

Oh! what guilt rested upon this blind and unbelieving multitude, when they thus derided the Son of God; cruelly extending those blessed arms, so constantly stretched forth in deeds of mercy; nailing his hands to the cross, and deriding him, saying; If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Even the very thieves, who were suffering for their many crimes, joined in the inhuman scoff. Added to this, God withdrew the light of his countenance; and under the excruciating death of the cross, tortured with the most intense sufferings, the blessed Redeemer cried out in agony of soul, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And when he had cried again with a loud voice, he bowed his head, and yielded up the Ghost. And the vail of the temple was rent from top to bottom; the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and many of the saints that slept arose. And it was about the sixth hour. And there was darkness over all the earth till the ninth hour. And when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, they feared greatly, and said, Truly this was the Son of God. And when even was come, there was a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who was a disciple of Jesus, who came and begged his body, and wrapped it in a clean cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb.

There are many things, my dear children, which I wish to explain to you; but at present I can only speak of the infinite mercy of God in Christ; of the wonderful compassion of our blessed Redeemer. Children, he died for you. See his streaming wounds; hear his groans—it was

for you. Will you go away and forget it? Will you mingle in the giddy rounds of pleasure, and forget it? Can you forget such love? turn away from a Savior that has suffered so much, that you might be reconciled to God? suffered so much that you might be *saved* from suffering? Oh, do not be so wicked as to slight this Savior. Do you feel that you are too young to be religious? Cherish no such thoughts. He even invites little children to come to him; and O how certainly will all secure their happiness, who accept this gracious invitation. To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

I had intended to make some further explanation, but find that I cannot at present. So saying, Mrs. Lyman left them to meditate on the truths they had heard.



LECTURE XIX.

Explanation—The Savior rises—and ascends to heaven.

SEE, aunt, see, said the delighted Emily, how many shells Papa has sent us. Here are some dark brown ones with white spots and a beautiful polish.

Yes, said Catharine, eagerly interrupting her; and here are pearl shells, and these elegant colors like the feathers of a peacock. And here are two little boxes, made of cloves sewed together; and here are a pair of bracelets of beautiful white shells, such as they wear in the Sandwich Islands. And Papa has written us a long letter, and says we must study Conchology, and he says he does not doubt cousin Herbert can help us. He has sent Mama many beautiful things, I dare say. See this great box, aunt. But Mama has not looked at them,

though they have been here these three hours. She took the letters, and I suppose won't think of any thing but Papa this ever so long. But now you have come to give us a lecture, we will put away our presents; and may we not speak to Mama, aunt; she always loves to hear the lecture. And Herbert, you must put away your book, must not he, aunt? He will know all about Conchology, before we begin. O dear, aunt, don't I talk a great deal too much? I wish Mama was here, and then I should know what Papa said in his letter to her. So saying she ran away, and soon returned with her mother, at whose request every other subject was forgotten, as the hour for the lecture had arrived. And solemnity soon rested on every countenance; as they recollected that Mrs. Lyman, in her last lecture, had described to them the sufferings of the Savior.

I told you, my children, she observed, that there were some things in my last lecture, which needed explanation. Do you recollect any part of it, which you did not understand?

Herbert. Something was said about the preparation for the passover. I thought our Savior had eaten the passover with his disciples before he suffered.

Mrs. L. That was a very natural mistake, my son. The feast continued seven days. The first and the last were peculiarly solemn. On the first, Christ eat the paschal lamb with his disciples. This lamb was a type of Christ, and is called the passover. So Christ, in allusion to the lamb, is himself spoken of as our passover in the New Testament. Was there nothing in the darkness that seemed mysterious?

Herbert. Was it not an eclipse of the sun?

Mrs. L. What causes an eclipse of the sun, Emily.

Emily. It is caused by the moon passing between the sun and the earth. The moon, you know, is a dark body.

Mrs. L. When does it happen?

Emily. Only when there is a new moon.

Mrs. L. Our Savior was crucified at the full of the moon, so that the darkness, which then shrouded the earth, was unnatural, and showed the displeasure of God towards sinners. And it might be intended to shadow forth the darkness, that from that hour would rest upon the Jews. They were no longer to be a people peculiarly favored of the Lord. The gospel was about to be offered freely to Jew and Gentile. The middle wall of partition was broken down.

Emily. Is that what was signified by the rending of the veil of the temple?

Mrs. L. Yes, my dear, it has been so understood; and we hope and believe the time will come, when the knowledge of Christ will fill the whole earth.

Emily. Was the body of Christ embalmed according to the Jewish custom?

Mrs. L. When Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus the ruler laid the body in the tomb, they wound it up with many spices; though the burial seems to have been hurried, that they might not encroach upon their sabbath, which began at sunset. Probably it was intended more carefully to embalm it; for we are told that two women, who had followed him, no doubt with the most sincere reverence and respect, had also prepared spices for his burial.

Herbert. What was the state of things among the soldiers? Did they not expect his resurrection?

Mrs. L. The Jews knew full well that this had been predicted; and they went to Pilate for a strong guard of

Roman soldiers, who should surround the sepulchre, that his disciples might not come and steal away the body, and then report that Christ had risen. Their request was granted. A band of soldiers, it is thought sixty in number, were placed as a watch; and having made the sepulchre safe, they felt that they should soon be triumphant, for it was death for a Roman soldier to sleep on duty. There was no room whatever for deception. Hatred and power were united to guard the sepulchre. And when the sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James had brought sweet spices, that they might anoint Jesus. It was the first day of the week, before the rising of the sun; and they said, Who shall roll us away the stone? for it was very great. And when they looked, they saw that it was already rolled away; and entering into the sepulchre, they beheld a young man, clothed in a long white garment, who told them not to be frightened, for Jesus of Nazareth was risen from the dead. Then he directed them to go and tell his disciples, that Jesus went before them into Galilee.

Herbert. Was it not an angel that they saw?

Mrs. L. Yes; great things had been done at the sepulchre before these devoted women arrived, though it was very early. There had been an earthquake, and an angel had rolled back the stone from the door. Jesus had triumphed over death and the grave; and when the women went to tell his disciples, he himself met them, saying, all hail. O what an hour must this have been to these poor, trembling believers; and how must all their hopes and expectations have been confirmed beyond a doubt; and how high must their love and gratitude have risen, as they held him by the feet and worshipped him. Now when they were going, some of the watch came into

the city, and showed the chief priests all that was done; and when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money to the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept; and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews to this day. For the Jewish rulers were determined not to confess the truth, though they knew not what to say.

Herbert. What did the disciples do, when they heard that the Lord had risen?

Mrs. L. Peter and John hastened to the sepulchre, which they examined and immediately left. Undoubtedly Jerusalem was in great commotion, the soldiers were going about in great consternation and surprise, the disciples hastening to the tomb, while one company after another bore along their spices to manifest their respect for him, whom the grave could not hold. The women fearlessly testified of what they had seen, while the whole Sanhedrim must have trembled before this display of power from on high.

Emily. Did the Savior appear more than once before he met his disciples?

Mrs. L. Yes, a number of times; but it is impossible for me to give you all the particulars of his history; I have only time for the grand outlines. Probably many visited the tomb, and the same were there at different times. Two of the disciples were going to Emmaus, a village a little north of Jerusalem; and as they journeyed, they talked much of what had happened. Jesus joined them on the way, though he did not make himself known as their Master. They, supposing him to have

been a stranger, entered into particulars, and told him all that they had hoped and expected from Christ, and added what had been said respecting his resurrection. The Savior listened awhile, and then reproaching them as slow of heart to believe, he explained to them the scriptures, and told them that Christ was to suffer all these things, and then to enter into his glory.

Arriving at Emmaus, Christ appeared as if he would have gone further, but they begged that he would go in with them; and as he sat at meat, he took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight. Overjoyed as these faithful disciples were, they waited only to tell how their hearts burned within them, while he opened the scriptures to their understandings, and then retraced their steps to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven gathered together. At once they entered upon the delightful subject, that engrossed all their thoughts, and told them that Christ had appeared to them; and as they were dwelling with new joy and wonder upon all that their risen Lord had said, Christ was in the midst of them with the kind salutation, *Peace be unto you.*

Emily. Then they believed without a doubt.

Mrs. L. Not so. Though they had heard so much, they could not comprehend the resurrection. They appear not to have understood Christ, though he had so often explained the subject to them; and now thought they had seen a spirit, and were greatly frightened.

Catharine. What did he say to them?

Mrs. L. He soothed their fears, showed them his hands and his feet, which bore the print of the nails, and then ate before them. Then he instructed them more

fully in the scriptures, and bade them preach repentance to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Herbert. Among his enemies, and even his very murderers. Blessed Master! O how different from any human being. I see great beauty in Christ, mother. Do you suppose it is all my understanding?

Mrs. L. I know not, my son; though I know it is one thing to be sensible of some of the perfections of God; and another thing to love his whole character. The justice that condemns the hardened rebel goes as much to make up the perfections of God's character, as a whole, as the mercy that saves the repenting sinner. We must take our ideas of the character of God from the bible; and whatever that says, we must believe. Many deceive themselves by forming ideas of God such as they like; and believing him such a being as they imagine, they fearlessly say they love God, when in truth they only love the imaginary character they have drawn in their minds. In the character of God, all is perfection. If we discover that in the bible, which seems otherwise, it is owing to our ignorance.

Herbert. But mother, if we were to find any thing inconsistent in the bible, might we not reject it?

Mrs. L. Herbert, if we would understand the character of our Maker, we must study it in his works and in his word. We must look at the evidences of the truth of the bible. These we may examine in every possible shape, as closely as we wish. About these we may use all the reason and understanding, which God has given us. And if, after all this scrutiny, we are convinced, as I certainly am beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the bible is the word of God, we must take it as it is; and if any fact there recorded seems mysterious, we must re-

member that we have not minds to comprehend the Deity. He is God—the Maker of all things. He existed from eternity, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life—we are of yesterday. What can *we* know of God, that we should sit in judgment upon his revealed will?

Herbert. Mother, I understand what you say, and see that it is all right; but will you have the kindness to tell us more of the resurrection?

Mrs. L. Thomas was not with the other disciples when Christ appeared to them; and when he was informed of it, he would not believe. It seemed too much for his weak faith; and he plainly told the disciples, that unless he could put his hand into the prints of the nails, and into his wounded side, he would not believe. Eight days after this, Jesus came, the door being shut, and stood in the midst of them; and again he said, *Peace be unto you.* Then he said to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. O how must the unbelieving Thomas have been overwhelmed with shame and wonder, when he saw before him his risen Lord, who needed not to be told of any thing that he had said, having a perfect knowledge of all things. With what mingled feelings of shame and love must he have prostrated himself before him, while with the deepest reverence he exclaimed, *My Lord and my God.* Jesus said unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are those who have not seen me, and yet have believed.

After this Christ appeared to a large number of his disciples on a mountain in Galilee, and again at the sea Tiberias. When the Redeemer appeared to them for the last time before he ascended into heaven, after having

given them a commission to preach in his name, he bade them tarry at Jerusalem, until they were endued with power from on high. He then led them out as far as Bethany, and lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, *he was parted from them, and carried into heaven.* And the disciples worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with joy.

The apostles just before the ascension had asked, Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? but now, we may suppose, they *began* to have right views of the nature of Christ's kingdom, and of his object in coming into this world. Slowly would the light of divine truth dawn upon their darkened understandings; and as they looked back upon the types and shadows of the Jewish law, upon the long line of prophets, who had so accurately foretold what had now been accomplished, at Jerusalem, in the person of their divine Master, with what ardent devotion, with what deep sincerity would they adopt as their own the song of the angelic host, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.



LECTURE XX.

The apostles receive the Holy Spirit—The gospel spreads—Peter and John imprisoned—Death of Ananias and Sapphira—Stephen stoned.

Mrs. LYMAN and aunt Elizabeth had just returned from a walk; and entering the parlor, perceived that the lecture hour had nearly arrived. We are happy to see you, and shall be in readiness for the lecture, said Herbert. We are only doing a little with our shells.

Yes, said Catharine, who was a dear lover of conversation; we, that is, Herbert and Emily, have put them in three parcels; and Herbert says they are placed according to their several divisions, which are Univalves, Bivalves, and Multivalves. We have only one specimen of Multivalves, and ever so many little ones. With these Emily says we must make a Chinese temple. Won't that be beautiful, mama?

Aunt Elizabeth. I think it would be rather pretty, my little girl; and if you will not take any of the hours that belong to study or plain sewing, I shall be willing to have you amuse yourself by doing it. But you must talk no more of it at present. Herbert and Emily look as if they were quite impatient for the lecture.

Herbert. Now we shall know all about the journeys of the apostles, and when they wrote their letters to the churches.

Catharine. Why Herbert, I did not know that they ever wrote a letter in their lives.

Emily. O yes you did, only you did not think, because they are called *epistles* in the New Testament; the epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, and so on.

Catharine. Is that it? O yes, I knew of them; but will you please to begin, aunt? for I think it will be delightful to hear about it.

Mrs. L. After the eleven had witnessed the ascension of our Lord from that part of Bethany, which included the mount of Olives, they returned, as I have before observed, to Jerusalem, according to the appointment of Christ; and in an upper chamber, waited for the Spirit to be poured out upon them. It was a time of prayer and solemn deliberation.

Herbert. Were none present but the eleven?

Mrs. L. Yes, there were a hundred and twenty present. We are not told who, except in a few instances. Mary the mother of Christ was there, and this is the last time she is mentioned in the scriptures. We know nothing further of her history. At this time, Peter stood up among his brethren, and making mention of Judas, and of the prophecies that had been fulfilled by his treachery, proposed that another should be chosen to fill his place. They prayed, after having set apart two of their number, whom they probably considered the most suitable; and then, casting lots, the lot fell upon Matthias, who was afterwards numbered with the eleven.

This little company probably contained all, who were willing openly to acknowledge Christ. Doubtless there were others, who were convinced that the Messiah had indeed come; though they were not prepared to forsake all and follow him. That is the case at the present day. Many believe religion necessary, who yet prefer the world. Poor deluded mortals! In a little time all that they will need will be a slight covering for their bodies, and a narrow spot of earth to lay their lifeless clay. What will the world profit such at that hour? and that hour will surely come.

You know I told you the apostles waited for the descent of the Holy Spirit. On the day of pentecost it descended. For what purpose was the feast of pentecost instituted, Herbert?

Herbert. To commemorate the giving of the law from mount Sinai.

Mrs. L. Very well, and it is thought by commentators upon the bible, that it was designed likewise to prefigure the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles.

The law was given one thousand four hundred and forty years before this.

But to proceed. When the day of pentecost was fully come, they were all, with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. Under the ancient dispensation, God often used the emblem of fire. The faith of the apostles was still weak, and God condescended to grant them such a manifestation of his presence as they could see and hear. He thus gave them the evidence of their senses.

Herbert. What was meant by the cloven tongues?

Mrs. L. The operations of the Spirit were various. That of speaking different languages was one; and the tongues were cloven, or divided, to signify that God would divide unto all nations the knowledge of his mercy in Christ. Thus far the Jews had been the only favored people of God; but now their privileges were to be shared with others.

Emily. Do you suppose this was known at Jerusalem, aunt?

Mrs. L. O yes, my child; and from there it was extensively spread abroad. It was the time of one of their great festivals, which would of itself assemble many; and we are informed there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven. Now when the event I have related was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because every man heard them speak in his own language. This miraculous gift of tongues astonished the people, and they were willing to attribute it to any but a good cause; but Peter, full

of love to God, and perhaps anxious to make all the reparation in his power for having denied his Master, repelled their reproaches and unjust insinuations; and then, in a most glowing and eloquent manner, rehearsed to them many of the ancient prophecies, pointed out their fulfillment, and earnestly preached Jesus to the wondering multitude.

Herbert. What effect did it have? Was there a revival?

Mrs. L. Yes, Herbert, there was a great revival; or perhaps in this place it would be better to say, there was a powerful awakening of sinners. Many were pricked in their hearts, and came to the apostles with the interesting inquiry, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter pointed them to Christ, and bade them repent.

Herbert. Were any converted at this time?

Mrs. L. The same day were added unto them three thousand souls. The same day; this was indeed a great work. O how must the hearts of the apostles have been filled with wonder, love and praise.

Herbert. Is this such a kind of revival as I read of in the Christian Mirror last week?

Mrs. L. Yes, my dear, in imitation of the first christians, the immediate disciples of our Savior, pious people are often with one accord in one place, waiting for the descent of the Holy Spirit. And though the age of miracles is now past, so that we hear no mighty rushing wind, and see no cloven tongues, the pious feel the silent operations of the same Spirit, that wrought the wonders of that day; and are influenced by it to seek earnestly for the salvation of sinners, and to imitate the example left by the blessed Jesus. It is a great duty to seek for the Spirit of God to awaken sinners; and when christians are

with one accord in one place, waiting for this heavenly gift, God does not often disappoint their expectations.

Herbert. What did the disciples do, after the day of pentecost?

Mrs. L. They seem to have had great enjoyment in the things of religion, and to have been attentive to its duties. They lived near to God by prayer, and were much engaged in christian conversation. We are likewise informed that they had all things common. Among such a multitude, some probably were poor and others rich; but they sold their possessions, and cast the money into a common stock, that the wants of all might be supplied.

Herbert. This seems like loving our neighbor as ourselves. Is it a duty to share all things in common as these first christians did?

Mrs. L. I don't know that it is any where commanded, Herbert; and think, perhaps, it would not promote the best good of society. But it is said, Whosoever hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? as much as to say, that he, who will not relieve the wants of the destitute christian, has no right to think that he loves God.

Emily. Did the apostles heal the sick as the Savior did?

Mrs. L. Yes, they performed miracles, though but few of them are recorded. In the third chapter of Acts we have an account of a man lame from his birth, whom Peter and John healed in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. No doubt these mighty works were very much the subject of conversation, for we find that not long after, Peter and John were imprisoned by the Sanhedrim.

Herbert. What, for healing the cripple?

Mrs. L. Yes, and for preaching. When the chief priests and rulers were assembled, they asked the apostles of what had been done ; and Peter, ever the foremost in conversation, told them plainly of Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, and ascribed the miracle to his power.

Herbert. Was the Sanhedrim convinced?

Mrs. L. So far convinced that they did not dare to proceed farther against them. They acknowledged that a notable miracle had been done, which was manifest to all Jerusalem. So they threatened them and let them go. Returning to their brethren, they reported all that the chief priests and elders had said; and the whole assembly praised God for his goodness, and asked for grace to be faithful amidst their enemies. And when they prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Under this divine power, the word of God was successfully preached. Five thousand had been added to the number of the believers, and the same spirit of brotherly love continued.

But even the primitive church was not pure. Ananias and Sapphira, pretending to be influenced by the Holy Spirit, brought, as they said, the price of a possession, which they had sold, and gave it to the apostles. But Ananias and Sapphira were hypocrites; for they kept back a part of the money, while they affirmed that they had given the whole; thus belying the Holy Spirit, by which they pretended to be actuated. And God came out in judgment against them, cutting them off by a sudden and untimely death. For they had brought great dishonor upon the Spirit of God by pretending to be un-

der its influence while they were following the suggestions of Satan.

This, my dear children, was a strong mark of God's displeasure. His judgments at the present day, do not often so speedily follow sin; but he is the same at all times. He changeth not. No revolution of years will ever lead the Almighty to approve deceit. My children, there is no one thing, of which I feel more sincerely anxious, than to see you grow up with an utter abhorrence of deception. Depend upon it, openness and integrity will do that for you even in this world, that deception never can. Now I entreat you to remember the abhorrence, which the Almighty manifested towards lying lips, all the dyas of your lives; and turn not aside in the most minute particular, from the strait and narrow path of integrity. Aside from the sin that is attached to lying, there is a meanness in it, that will ever make the liar the scorn of the public.

Herbert. Did the apostles continue to work miracles?

Mrs. L. O yes; even their shadow as they passed by, relieved the sufferer. Multitudes resorted to them, and Jerusalem was filled with their doctrine.

Emily. How did the high priest and the elders like their popularity?

Mrs. L. They were greatly enraged, and again imprisoned the apostles; but the angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, brought them forth, and bade them go and stand in the temple, and speak to the people.

Herbert. Were not their enemies convinced then?

Mrs. L. They seem not to have been as the apostles were once more brought before the council. And when they boldly asserted their purpose to obey God rather than man, Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, who it seems

was very eminent, advocated their cause; and to him the council listened so far as to liberate the apostles after they had beaten them, and commanded them to speak no more in the name of Jesus.

Catharine. Did they beat them? How did the apostles bear it?

Mrs. L. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name; and daily in the temple, and in every house they ceased not to teach, and to preach Jesus Christ.

After this the apostles found themselves too much encumbered with their various duties; and having learned that certain widows suffered from neglect, they ordained seven deacons to attend particularly to the poor. Among them was Stephen, a very devoted christian.

Emily. Did the church continue to increase?

Mrs. L. Very much. Meanwhile Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. He boldly advocated the cause of God, rehearsing his dealings with his people from very ancient times, and with great zeal and ardor reproved them for their sins. But in the midst of his animated discourse, which you will find in the seventh chapter of Acts, they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven; and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And he said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death.

Herbert. I remember that awful scene; but he died happy.

Mrs. L. Yes, Herbert, he knew in whom he believed; and with the spirit of his Master, he prayed for his murderers; then calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit, he entered into rest; into that brighter, better world, where the wicked cease from troubling. You see here, my children, the difference between true religion, and blind, misguided bigotry and zeal. True religion is kind, meek and forgiving, in every age. I do not mean by this that christians are perfect; but they have in Jesus Christ, a perfect pattern; and the more they love him, the more they will strive and pray to be like him.

Herbert. What terrible persecution, mother. And what happened after this?

Mrs. L. Persecution abounded, notwithstanding there were some found, who took up the body of the martyr, Stephen, and buried it with great lamentation. The church, except the apostles, were scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria.

At this period of the church we first hear of Saul. He consented to the death of Stephen, and rejoiced in it: and as the sacred penman expresses it, he made havoc of the church, entering into every church, hailing men and women, and committing them to prison.

By the dispersion of the disciples abroad, the gospel was preached far and wide, and many were added to the Lord. When the disciples which were at Jerusalem saw what a field of usefulness was open in Samaria, and how many encouraging appearances there were of a revival, they sent Peter and John, two of the most eminent and devoted of their number, to reap the rich harvest. You will find a history of their labors in the eighth chapter of Acts.

I must pass lightly over many things for want of time.

When the churches in Samaria were settled, and had ministers appointed, the apostles appear to have returned to Jerusalem; about this time, an angel of the Lord appeared to Philip, and directed him to go south to a desert between Jerusalem and Gaza.

But children, I presume you are fatigued before this, and I must leave the interesting account of his journey until another time. You see how God takes care of his cause, and his own people; and he is able to deliver them from prison and from death, if their best good require it. Yes, be assured he orders all things well; and they, who put their trust in him will be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. But good night, my children. Upon this the children, though somewhat unwillingly, bade their aunt good night, and retired.



LECTURE XXI.

Philip and the Eunuch—Saul converted—Cornelius.

ALL at work upon the temple, said Mrs. Lyman, as she entered the parlor, and saw the children stringing little white shells not as large as a pea, and winding them about pieces of wood, that Herbert had prepared for pillars. Aunt Elizabeth was with them enjoying their innocent pleasure, and assisting to raise the little fabric, which was to be supported by pillars and covered with shells interspersed with simple ornaments. Delighted as they all were with their employment, they cheerfully laid it by, and with much pleasure gave their undivided attention to the lecture.

Herbert. I think, aunt, the lectures grow more interesting every week.

Catharine. Yes, aunt; and did you not promise to tell us a story?

Herbert. Catharine is as much engaged about stories as I used to be, when you first began your lectures.

Mrs. L. That was three years since. Catharine is about as old now as you were then. But to the story. Philip, as I told you, was directed to go to a desert south of Jerusalem.

Herbert. Yes, mother; and did he go?

Mrs. L. Yes, and when he arrived there, he was at once led to see the purpose for which he was sent. A eunuch who was treasurer and one of the chief officers of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, having been to Jerusalem, was returning home in his chariot. As he travelled, he was reading the prophet Isaiah; the passage he was reading, which is in the fifty third chapter, described what had actually been accomplished in Christ. Philip, probably enlightened by the spirit of God to perceive the object of his journey, drew near and inquired if he understood what he read. He replied, How can I except some man should guide me?—and he desired Philip to come up and sit with him. Thus favorably received by this distinguished traveller, Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at the same scripture, preached Jesus unto him. Emily, where is Ethiopia?

Emily. It is in Africa.

Mrs. L. Very well. Candace was a name common to the queens of that country.

Herbert. How did the preaching of Philip affect the eunuch?

Mrs. L. He seems at once to have received the truth

in the love of it. He was travelling from Jerusalem, when Philip overtook him. There, probably, he had heard of Christ and his death on the cross; and when Philip showed him how exactly all this was the fulfilment of ancient prophecy, he believed. Soon coming to where there was water, he begged of Philip that he might be baptized; and upon his expressing his firm belief in the Savior, Philip baptized him. On their coming up from the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more. He then went on his way rejoicing, but Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

Herbert. Then the eunuch would go home, and tell all about the religion of Christ among his own people.

Mrs. L. Yes; and the converts, who fled from Jerusalem on account of the persecution, preached the gospel to the Jews in the provinces, so that religion flourished in the land. But it not unfrequently happens, when there are extensive revivals of religion, that there is great opposition among those who know little of its nature or object. It has been so from the earliest ages of the Church.

About this period, Saul of Tarsus is again introduced, and he is spoken of as breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He had received a letter from the high priest, giving him permission if he found any in this way, whether they were men or women, that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.—Saul was no doubt very sincere, and thought he did God service, while he derided religion, and persecuted the pious. He was a man of great native powers of mind, and these had been strengthened and improved by the best education that the times could afford.

Herbert. I suppose that was not such an education as ministers have now.

Mrs. L. We are told by Josephus, the Jewish historian, that the learning of the Jews consisted in the knowledge of their own laws and religion, as contained in the sacred writings. Added to this, Saul probably had some knowledge of Greek rhetoric and philosophy, but it is not supposed this was very extensive. The early part of his life was spent in Tarsus, which was the metropolis of Cilicia. As a place of education, it excelled all the Greek cities. His parents were Hebrews of the tribe of Benjamin; as he says of himself, he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews; that is, descended from Hebrew parents. Though a Jew, Saul's father was a Roman citizen, which entitled him and his family to peculiar privileges; but Saul probably left Tarsus when quite young.

It is not strange, then, that the pride of the natural heart should make him suppose himself more capable of judging aright in these matters, than a few ignorant fishermen would be; for you know that our Lord chose his disciples from the most uneducated part of the community. It was probably in this state of mind that he journeyed; and as he came near to Damascus, suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said to him, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. Then trembling and afraid, he said,—Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? You see, my children, how perfectly easy it is for God to bring down the pride and opposition of the greatest men; if he but speak the word, from being opposing persecutors, they are meek and sub-

dued; and in the humblest accents are ready to inquire, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

Emily. Was Saul alone?

Mrs. L. No; but we are told the men, who were with him heard a voice, but saw no man. And they led him by the hand, and brought him to Damascus, and he was there three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink. Where is Damascus, Herbert?

Herbert. Northeast of Galilee. It was the capital of Syria. But what did Paul do after he arrived at Damascus?

Mrs. L. There was in that place a little band of believers, and among them one named Ananias. Him the Lord directed in a dream to visit Saul of Tarsus. And Ananias said, Lord, I have heard by many of this man; how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; he is a chosen vessel to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

Emily. And Ananias obeyed, did not he, aunt?

Mrs. L. O yes, Emily; he went immediately as he was directed; and having found Saul, he addressed him not as a persecuting enemy; but as a reconciled friend in Christ. Putting his hands upon him, he said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared to thee by the way, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Herbert. I recollect that, mother; and he immediately received his sight, and was baptized; but I do not remember what he did in Damascus.

Mrs. L. He appears to have joined himself to the dis-

ciples, and to have preached Christ openly in the synagogues.

Herbert. I think people must have been surprised.

Mrs. L. Yes, it is so said in the scriptures; and it is likewise said he confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that Christ had indeed come.

Herbert. How old was Saul, when he was supposed to have been converted?

Mrs. L. About thirty-four. Dates respecting this period differ; but it was probably three or four years after the crucifixion. After Saul had remained some time at Damascus, he went into Arabia, and labored there for a considerable time. After his return from Damascus, there was an attempt made to kill him. The gates were guarded, that he might be destroyed as he passed out; but the conspiracy having been discovered, the disciples let him down by the wall in a basket.

Herbert. How long was this after his conversion?

Mrs. L. Three years. Having escaped these dangers, he journeyed towards Jerusalem.

Emily. How far was Jerusalem from Damascus?

Mrs. L. Something like a hundred and fifty miles; but the people then had not those facilities for travelling that we have at the present day. Added to this, there had been wars, which had prevented the intercourse of the two nations; so that when Saul arrived among the disciples, they thought of him only as a persecutor, and as concealing some unkindness under the appearance of friendship, with which he spoke to them.

Emily. Did they finally become convinced?

Mrs. L. Yes; Barnabas, by some means, had become somewhat acquainted with his character; and he brought him to the apostles, and related the mysterious manner

of his conversion. They were at once interested in him; and he began to speak boldly in the name of Jesus. He especially disputed with the Grecians, who soon formed a plan to kill him. He then went to Tarsus, and preached there and in the neighboring cities. Then, as we are informed, the churches had rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied.

Herbert. I suppose the other apostles continued to preach.

Mrs. L. Doubtless they did, though but few of their labors are mentioned. We have, however, a little earlier than the time of which I have been speaking, an account of a journey, which Peter took through various parts of Judea and the region adjoining. It is probable he wished to see what progress the gospel was making in those places, where it had been planted by the disciples, who had been scattered abroad by the persecution. Among other places he visited Lydda, a town near the shores of the Mediterranean sea; and he there found a certain man, who had been confined to his bed eight years by the palsy. And Peter said to him, Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. This miraculous cure, wrought in the name of Christ, was the means of enlarging the church.

At a village not far distant from Lydda, there were disciples living, who doubtless had heard of the miracle of healing performed by Peter. And they sent to him to visit Joppa; for there had occurred a death of a pious, useful woman, and they probably hoped that Peter had power to raise her to life; and the event showed that they were not mistaken. And it was known that he had raised

her from death throughout Joppa; and many believed on the Lord.

Emily. Was not that Dorcas, aunt, who made so many garments, and did so much for the poor?

Herbert. Yes, I knew it was, Emily. I knew it as soon as mother mentioned it; because I learned her story when the ladies formed their charitable society; which, you know, they call the "Dorcas Society." Did that great miracle make people believe?

Mrs. L. Yes, many believed. But to proceed. Up to this time, none had been admitted to the christian church but such as were in some way connected with the Jews. Jews, Samaritans and proselytes were all circumcised persons, and observed the ceremonial law.

Herbert. But was not the eunuch, whom Philip baptized, a Gentile.

Mrs. L. He is supposed to have been a proselyte to the Jewish religion. But what I was going to relate is the event, which led to the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. It was a vision of Peter. About the middle of the day, Peter had retired to the house top to pray. I have before explained to you that the eastern manner of building was very different from ours; and probably the flat top of the house offered Peter the best retirement he could find. It was near the usual hour of dining, and Peter became hungry, and would have eaten; but he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth. In this were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice unto him, saying, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, not so, Lord; for I have

never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common. This was done thrice, and the vessel was received up into heaven.

Herbert. What did the vision mean?

Mrs. L. This, perhaps, will be best explained by relating this history of Cornelius.

Catharine. Who was Cornelius?

Mrs. L. He was an officer in an army then quartered at Cæsarea; a strong city upon the Mediterranean, fortified by Herod the great, and called Cæsarea in honor of Augustus Cæsar. The governor resided here; and this band of the Roman army might have been his life guard. Be that as it may, Cornelius ranked well in society. It is also said of him that he was just and devout, and feared God. He was benevolent and much in prayer. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour (that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon) an angel of the Lord coming unto him and saying, Cornelius. And when Cornelius looked on him he was afraid; and said, What is it, Lord? And the angel said, Thy prayers and thine alms have come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. He will tell thee what to do.

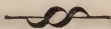
Herbert. Did Cornelius send to Peter?

Mrs. L. Yes, and his messengers arrived just as Peter had awakened from his trance. The visit at once explained the uncommon vision that he had seen.

Herbert. How, mother?

Mrs. L. God in early times elected the Jews to be his people; the only nation favored with a special revelation from heaven. And when he gave them this religion, he

guarded it in very many ways. He gave them directions in the use of meats, which must inevitably keep them from intercourse with other nations, while it taught them self denial and obedience. Many ceremonial laws, undoubtedly given in reference to the same wise end, had hitherto kept the Jews a distinct people. But now, as I have before remarked, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the gospel was to be preached to every nation. And Peter, when the messengers of Cornelius, a Gentile, arrived, was prepared to give up the ceremonies of the Jewish law, and mingle freely with the Gentile nations. But you may now rest a little while.



LECTURE XXII.

Gospel preached to the Gentiles—Charity—James murdered—Peter imprisoned and delivered by an angel—Paul and Barnabas go to Salamis and Antioch.

AFTER a half hour spent in relaxing the mind, Mrs. Lyman inquired of her young auditors if they would hear further, or wait till another Saturday evening. O do have the kindness to finish the story of Cornelius now, said every youthful voice. Mrs. Lyman, accustomed to promote the gratification of her little household, whenever she could do it with safety to them, not regarding her own fatigue, entered anew with lively interest on the story, which she had commenced.

Then Peter went down to the men, that were sent to him from Cornelius; and having learned that they came to invite him to visit their Master, with certain brethren from Joppa, he accompanied them to Cornelius.

Catharine. Did Cornelius expect Peter?

Mrs. L. Yes, and had invited a party of friends to meet him. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying; Stand up; I myself am also a man. This mark of homage as rendered to our Savior some pretend was an eastern custom; but you will notice that the apostles would never receive this worship, and for this very plain reason that the scriptures require that we should worship the Lord our God, and him only. Christ always received this adoration, never rebuking his disciples, even when they called him their *God*.

Catharine. O that was because the "Word was God." You knew the reason, did you not, aunt?

Emily. Why Catharine, do you think you are wiser than aunt?

Mrs. L. Catharine has said nothing amiss, my child; I am glad she is able to answer aright.

Herbert. Then I suppose Peter went into the house, and what next, dear mother?

Mrs. L. Then Peter related the vision he had seen, told them in what he supposed he had been instructed, namely, that the favor of God was no longer to be confined to the Jewish nation; but that in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him. He then, for the first time, openly preached Christ to a Gentile congregation. And while he yet spake, the Holy Spirit fell on all them, who heard his words. Those who adhered to the Jews were greatly astonished when they heard the Gentiles speak with other tongues and magnify God. Then Peter said, Can any forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he com-

manded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Herbert. How did the church at Jerusalem like it?

Mrs. L. Intelligence of what had been done soon reached them, but it gave them no pleasure. It had been considered unlawful even to enter into conversation with a Gentile, and they could not feel as if Peter had done right in preaching the gospel to them. It is said his brethren contended with him; but Peter gave them a faithful account of Cornelius, and of the vision he had seen, and the effects that had followed his preaching. And then they were ready to rejoice, and glorify God, that to the Gentiles also God had granted repentance unto life.

Herbert. Was the gospel preached to any other Gentiles?

Mrs. L. Yes; when the converts, who had been dispersed by the persecution after the death of Stephen heard of the vision of Peter, they also preached to the devout Gentiles; and numbers believed, and turned to the Lord. The church at Jerusalem, upon being made acquainted with this circumstance, sent Barnabas to make inquiry. Barnabas went to Tarsus for Saul, who was preaching there; and he accompanied him to Antioch in Syria. Here the disciples were first called Christians. About this time, prophets from Jerusalem visited Antioch, and foretold a famine.

Herbert. What did the people do? lay up for themselves as the Egyptians did before the famine in Joseph's time?

Mrs. L. There is nothing said of that; but we are told that they made a collection for the poor brethren, who were at Jerusalem.

Emily. Could not the people of Jerusalem take care of their own poor?

Mrs. L. Probably there was a greater proportion of sufferers there than at Antioch. Christ has taught us by the parable of the good Samaritan, that all mankind are our brethren. It is impossible to read the history of the bible without being impressed with the duty of being benevolent. Pious people, and all, who would tread in the steps of our divine Master, must be charitable; must guard against a spirit of selfishness. God will not excuse that person, whoever he is, that does not consider the poor.

Herbert. But mother, are not some so poor that they have nothing to give?

Mrs. L. Not many, my son. If a person has health, I think God will require him, for his own sake, to do good to others. There is such a disposition in the hearts of all to be selfish, that it requires constant exertions to keep this principle in place, and love our neighbor as ourselves. The bible, my children, is full of promises to those who are liberal; and if a poor christian parts with that which he *needs*, and does it with right motives, God will certainly return it to him. The word of God assures us, that those, who show mercy and give to the poor, shall not be ashamed in the evil time, but shall be satisfied in the days of famine. Now if I were to tell you to give away your hat, Herbert, with the promise that when you needed another, you should have it, would you doubt my word?

Herbert. Should I doubt your word, mother? No, I am sure I should not, I know that you are not only too good to tell a lie, but too kind to let me want.

Mrs. L. This, my son, is just the confidence that you ought to have in me; and it is just such confidence

as we all ought to place in God. He has said, Give, and and it shall be given to you again; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosoms. O that each of you, my dear children, would now in your youth gain right ideas upon this subject; and adopt principles that may grow with your growth, and strengthen with your strength. Covetousness is a great sin. *Never, I entreat of you, appropriate for yourselves, the whole of any thing that is yours.* You will understand me. I mean money, or any thing that may properly be divided.

Catharine. We have for a great while belonged to the juvenile society, and we have lately joined the bible society.

Mrs. L. Where do you get your money, Catharine?

Catharine. O mama always gives us money for that, and for the monthly concert, and for all contributions.

Mrs. L. Then my little niece, it is your mama that is charitable, and not you. Depend upon it, it is *her* charity.

Emily. But aunt, what could we do? We have not money of our own.

Mrs. L. True, unless it is given you, when you should always consecrate a part. But you have hands, and these God has given to no person to fold in idleness. He has given you taste. Write *holiness to the Lord* upon it, and something will be earned for his treasury.

Catharine. Why aunt, I do not understand one single word you say. O I wish I did, for I love to be good.

Mrs. L. I will tell you, my dear little girl. The beautiful little temple, that you made of shells, your watch ribbon ornamented with beads, and many other little articles of yours, are works of *taste*. This taste, or ability to do these things, is given you by your maker. Every person

has more or less of it; and it will enable you, if cultivated, to furnish such useful and ornamental articles as will command money. If this money is used for charitable purposes, it will be your own charity, and not that of your parents.

Catharine. No, but we cannot give away that little temple. It is a beauty, aunt, every body admires it.

Emily. O Catharine, how can you say so? That is very selfish.

Mrs. L. Yes, it is. This is just the spirit that keeps thousands from being useful in the world. But we will now return to our history, and converse more upon this subject at a future time.

Herbert. Did the famine that had been foretold, really come?

Mrs. L. Yes, we are told in the Acts, that it came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar. It is also mentioned by Josephus, and other historians. It lasted two years.

About this time, we read of the persecutions of Herod. He was first tetrarch of Galilee, and afterwards king of Judea. He put James to death; and perceiving that this gratified the Jews, he took Peter, and imprisoned him, and had him guarded by four quaternions of soldiers.

Herbert. How many made a quaternion?

Mrs. L. Four.

Emily. But aunt, was James one of the twelve?

Herbert. Yes, dear, and one who had been favored of Christ. He witnessed his transfiguration. He was one of the sons of Zebedee of whom Christ had said, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and now the prediction was fulfilled.

Catharine. Were you going to tell us of Peter's imprisonment?

Mrs. L. Yes; Herod finding that the beheading of James, which was probably done privately, pleased the Jews, imprisoned Peter till after the passover, then doubtless intending to bring him forward as a public example. But the Lord never wants means, when he has a purpose to accomplish. As Peter was quietly sleeping between two soldiers the night before Herod intended to bring him forward, the angel of the Lord stood before him in the prison.

Herbert. How could he sleep at such a time?

Mrs. L. He knew in whom he had believed, Herbert. A christian should always trust in God; for he has his sure promise that all things shall work together for his good. The angel then smote Peter on his side and bade him rise. Then the chains fell off from him; and in obedience to the command of the angel, he cast his garment about him, and went out.

Herbert. How great must have been the surprise of Peter at this deliverance.

Mrs. L. Yes; we are told he wist not what it was; but thought he saw a vision.

Catharine. How could they get through this guard of sixteen soldiers?

Mrs. L. Because it was the good pleasure of the Lord that they should; and when they [had come to the iron gate of the city, it opened to them of its own accord.

Catharine. Then what did Peter do?

Mrs. L. He came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, where the disciples had met to pray. A young woman, who heard him knocking at the door, went to listen; and knowing his voice, she was so overjoyed that she

would not let him in; but ran to acquaint the disciples with the cheering fact, that Peter was at the door. These devoted christians filled with brotherly love and zeal for the honor of God, prayed without ceasing for Peter. But such a mixture of imperfection attached to them, that when their prayer was answered, and Peter stood at the door, they even doubted the evidence of their own senses. But Peter continued knocking, and soon gained admittance. He beckoned to them with his hand to hold their peace, and declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He told them to go and show those things to James and the rest of the brethren, and then departed.

Herbert. What did Herod say, when he found he had lost his prisoner?

Mrs. L. The history informs us that there was no small stir among the soldiers; and that Herod ordered the death of the guard, who let him escape.

Catharine. Were they put to death?

Mrs. L. We are not informed. Such orders were generally executed immediately; though some have conjectured that the death of the tyrant himself, which took place soon after, prevented it.

The next account that we have of the labors of these primitive christians, is recorded in the tenth chapter of Acts. God by his spirit commanded that Barnabas and Saul should be set apart to carry the gospel to heathen nations. They had been ordained as ministers; but when this new duty was imposed upon them, the several churches in Antioch, which was a large place, assembled to keep a day of fasting and prayer, and other religious services, while they ordained these brethren, and set them apart for the service of the heathen. So they, being sent forth

by the Holy Spirit, departed to Seleucia, and from thence sailed to Cyprus. Seleucia was a sea port on the Mediterranean. Where is Cyprus, Catharine?

Catharine. It is an island in the Mediterranean.

Mrs. L. The apostles landed at Salamis, which was on the east side of the island; and from thence, probably, preached until they reached Paphos, which lay on the western coast; not only preaching to the Gentiles, but also offering the gospel to the Jews; whenever they came to a synagogue, in which they could preach.

Herbert. What was done at Paphos?

Mrs. L. Paphos seems to have been the seat of wickedness. Here was a temple dedicated to Venus, so that the people were in great need of instruction, being gross idolators. Here also the apostles found a sorcerer, who was a Jew. But the deputy of the country, (or governor under the Roman Emperor,) whose name was Sergius Paulus, a Gentile, encouraged the apostles, and was willing to hear them preach. He accordingly sent for them. But Elymas the sorcerer opposed them.

Emily. Did this have any effect upon the deputy?

Mrs. L. You shall hear. Then Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness; wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee; thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

We are not told of any other work that was performed,

or any other converts; but we have reason to believe that much more was accomplished than is recorded.

After this they left the island; and touching at Perga in Pamphylia passed on to Antioch, which is said to be in Pisidia to distinguish it from Antioch in Syria, where the apostles were ordained. Pisidia was in lesser Asia. There were Jews there, and Paul and Barnabas went into their synagogue.

Herbert. Paul? Why do not you say Saul, mother?

Mrs. L. The name Paul is given him, as recorded in the bible, for the first time, after the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the deputy. After this he is uniformly called by this name. After the usual services of the Synagogue, the rulers invited Paul and Barnabas to preach. Ye men and brethren, said they; if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Catharine. Did they preach?

Mrs. L. Yes, Paul did; and in the thirteenth chapter of Acts you have his interesting sermon recorded. In the first place he took a view of the prophecies concerning Christ; then adverted to his history and death, and made an application to the consciences of the Jews. Beware, he said, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days; a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

LECTURE XXIII.

Various labors—Council at Jerusalem—Paul and Barnabas separate—Paul and Silas go to Macedonia—To Thessalonica—To Athens—To Corinth.

EVERY leisure moment in all the week was devoted to works of taste; and by early rising, and by diligence the misses had the pleasure of accomplishing their object. As Mrs. Lyman, after an afternoon spent in her chamber, went into the parlor to give the expected lecture, she was quite gratified to see that not only the temple was completed, but also a very neat pair of card racks of chrystalized alum, in the shape of leaves, confined at the bottom by a bow of white satin ribbon, which Herbert had furnished with the avails of garden seeds he had sold. For Herbert was always careful to have a supply of such seeds as were saleable, and not only so, but he had a bed in the garden, which he prepared himself (for Herbert was taught to work) and in which he sowed onions, for which he generally found a ready market, and the avails always went into his charity purse. For in imitation of his mother, he was very systematic about his charities; but the girls never heard a lisp of it, till the conversation occurred about works of taste. There was no display of these works in the family at the cottage, but they were in *constant progress*. Sometimes, as in this case, they were spoken of to a friend; but they were *never displayed*. Mrs. Lyman admired the neatness, with which the work was executed, and told them they should certainly go to Portland to the fair; and then requesting their attention to the lecture, she proceeded with the history of the apostles' labors.

We left off last Saturday evening, where the Jews had

been listening to the sermon preached by Paul in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia. After he had finished, the Gentiles, to whom it was in a great measure new, requested that they might hear it again on the next Sabbath. So when the Sabbath came about, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God.

Emily. How did the Jews like this attention to the Gentiles?

Mrs. L. They were filled with envy, and spake against those things, that were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Herbert. Paul was a bold preacher, mother. I remember that William was reading there, the last time he was at home; and he said he did not know what some people would do now a days, if they had to hear Paul preach. I did not think what he meant, but I *guess* it was because he preached so plain. Cousin Charles said he rather thought they would see it was of consequence to believe right; but I did not really understand him.

Mrs. L. Perhaps you will when you are older; if you please we will let it pass now.

Catharine. Did the apostles continue to preach there?

Mrs. L. No; there was a persecution raised, and they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came to Iconium. Where was that?

Herbert. It was in Asia Minor, northwest from the island of Cyprus.

Mrs. L. Here they went into the synagogue, where a multitude was assembled; but the Jews made trouble as

usual, and the city was divided; part held with the Jews and part with the apostles. Finding however that there was an intention to stone them, they went into Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and preached in that region. Here Paul healed a cripple by a word.

Herbert. What did the people say?

Mrs. L. They were so much affected that they thought it must be some heathen god. Probably they had no idea of the only living and true God. They wished therefore to offer sacrifice and worship to the apostles. Paul was greatly afflicted at the thought that they should so mistake their character; and he preached the true God to them.

The next we hear of Paul, he came near being stoned to death. Such were the vicissitudes in the life of this apostle to the Gentiles.

Catharine. Vicissitudes? does that mean changes?

Mrs. L. I beg your pardon, my dear, I ought to have said changes, which you would have understood without any hesitation.

About this time there arose a difference among those who believed at Antioch, thus early showing that these primitive christians were sanctified only in part. Many of the Jews were willing to receive Christ, but they contended that the Jewish law was to be observed in all its rites and ceremonies; and Paul and Barnabas were obliged to go to Jerusalem, to the ministers assembled in council, to settle their disturbances. It was then unanimously agreed by these ministers, that unnecessary burdens had been imposed on the Gentile converts, and permission was given that the rites and ceremonies of the law should be dispensed with. Still it was evidently the desire of all not to offend the prejudices of the Jews, but to

show all proper regard to their feelings. Paul and Barnabas, with others, were sent to Antioch, to give instruction on the subject.

After remaining some time at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas separated. Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus. It is supposed he labored faithfully for the cause of Christ, though nothing further is said of him in scripture history. Paul, accompanied by Silas, went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Where were Syria and Cilicia?

Catharine. Syria was east, and Cilicia north of the Mediterranean sea.

Mrs. L. Then they came to Derbe and Lystra. These were north east of Cilicia. Paul touched at several places in this region, and doubtless in all he instructed those whom he met, in the fundamental doctrines of religion, removing prejudices, clearing away error, and laboring earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus. He was forbidden by the Holy Spirit, to go into Asia Minor, including Phrygia, Mysia, Caria and Lydia. But having seen in a vision a man of Macedonia, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us; he immediately endeavored to go there, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called him to preach the gospel there. Where is Macedonia?

Herbert. In the southern part of Europe. It is north of Greece proper, though it has sometimes belonged to that people, and been considered a part of that country. When I read Dr. Howe's history of the Greek revolution, I looked out the geography of that country.

Mrs. L. We read of Paul at Philippi, one of the chief cities of Macedonia, and in various places in that region, preaching and teaching. On the sabbath we hear of him by the river's side; for there were here no syna-

agogues to preach in; but there was a place, where prayer was wont to be made. Here the apostle first saw Lydia, a seller of purple; and the Lord opened her heart, to attend to the things, which Paul had spoken. And she was baptized with her household.

Again as they were going out to the usual place to worship, a damsel met them, who had a spirit of divination, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. And she followed them, crying, these men are the servants of the most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation. Paul was grieved; for he saw, though her words were kind, that her heart was not right. And commanded the spirit, in the name of Jesus, to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

When the masters of this female saw that the hopes of their gains was gone, they drew Paul and Silas before the magistrates, and had them beaten, and then cast into prison: charging the jailor to keep them safely. In consequence of this, he thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God, and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. When the keeper of the prison saw this, he drew his sword, and would have killed himself; but Paul cried with a loud voice, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Emily. But why should the jailer have tried to kill himself?

Mrs. L. He knew that by the Roman law, the life of the jailer was forfeited, if a prisoner escaped; and to prevent a more terrible death, he was willing to be his own executioner. But Paul, in imitation of his Master, sought to do good to all. In answer to his anxious inquiry, he told the jailer, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And the jailer washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his house straitly. And he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. From some cause, we are not told what, the magistrates concluded no longer to detain the apostles in prison; but sent to them that they were at liberty to depart.

Catharine. And now I suppose they went with joy.

Mrs. L. No dear; Paul knew too well what belonged to a Roman citizen. He did not choose to be thrust out privately; it might not have been known that he was an innocent man. He chose to remain; for as he had been openly scourged uncondemned, he wished to be openly liberated.

Herbert. How did this affect the magistrates?

Mrs. L. They feared when they heard they were Romans, and came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of their city. These holy men desired no revenge; and when it was thus seen that they were legally discharged, they were ready to leave the place. From the prison, they went to the house of Lydia; where the brethren were assembled, probably to pray particularly for Paul and Silas.

Herbert. Did they continue to travel in Europe?

Mrs. L. Yes dear, they went to Thessalonica, where a considerable number embraced the truths they preached; but the unbelieving Jews raised an uproar against

them, and drove them from the city. From there they went to Berea, where those, who had heard the apostles, searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.

Not far from this time, though learned men are not agreed on the subject, it is supposed Paul wrote to the Galatians, to prove, in opposition to the Jewish teachers, that faith in Christ, and not imperfect obedience to the ceremonial law, was the ground of their salvation.

Catharine. And is this the same epistle that is in the bible with Galatians over the top?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear, the very same. Paul had the care of many churches. These he visited after, and God put it into his heart to write to these churches, upon the important doctrines and duties of our holy religion. These epistles are preserved in the bible, because the instructions they contain are as important to us, as they were to those to whom they were first addressed.

Meanwhile Paul, continuing his travels arrived at Athens, one of the Grecian cities, then under the dominion of the Romans. You know enough of ancient history to be sensible that Athens has been greatly distinguished for its literature; and at this time it seemed the seat of learning; how solid or important I cannot say; but it seems there were many who spent their time in hearing and telling that which was new.

Here Paul was taken, and carried before the Areopagus. This was the oldest and most respectable court of justice in Athens. It obtained its name from its place of meeting, on Mars' hill. Its members were those who had been the highest magistrates of the city, and had rendered themselves worthy of this honor, by the honest and diligent execution of the duties of their office. The meetings

of this tribunal were held in the open air, and in the night time. Before this august tribunal, the holy apostle was arraigned; and as he had felt his spirit stirred within him at witnessing their idolatries, he was prepared to speak boldly for the cause of God.

Herbert. And what did he say?

Mrs. L. He reproved them for their superstition; spoke of the unknown God, to whom he had found an altar inscribed; and added, Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. Then he spoke to them of the only living and true God; and confirmed his doctrine by the works of creation and providence; illustrating what he said by an appeal to their own poets. And then he called upon them to repent and turn from their idolatries.

Emily. How was his preaching liked?

Mrs. L. Some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

Herbert. Did any believe?

Mrs. L. The gospel had but little success. We are told that one member of the Areopagus followed him with a few others. From Athens Paul proceeded to Corinth, where he was obliged to labor for his support; for Paul, though of a good family, and devoted to learning, was taught the art of tent making.

Catharine. How did that happen, aunt?

Mrs. L. It was the custom among the Romans for those of the highest birth, to have some trade, by which, if reduced to poverty, they could earn an honest and independent living. This, my children, is true dignity; whilst the false pride that would lead an indigent person to suffer want, or live a burden to his friends rather than labor, justly deserves; and in one way or another generally receives the scorn of wise, reflecting people. De-

pend upon it, it discovers no superiority of mind to be idle or dependent. There are, however, cases, in which the most prudent foresight, and constant exertions, cannot save one from dependence. Such should always have the most delicate attention. By this time I presume you are fatigued; you may have a little recess, if you please.



LECTURE XXIV.

Labors, sufferings and travels of Paul till he arrives at Rome.

WE are all rested, aunt, said Catharine; and anxious to hear more of the journeys of the apostle, and to know when he wrote his letters. It is very strange I never thought that epistle meant letter before you told me. But shall you tell us any more now, aunt?

If you are all ready to hear, I will with pleasure, said Mrs. Lyman.

Herbert. We left Paul at Corinth, in Greece. What happened to him there?

Mrs. L. He had some trials to encounter, but on the whole suffered little inconvenience. He remained there a year and six months, laboring faithfully, and with considerable success. From Corinth he went to Crete, and was compelled on his return to winter at Nicopolis, from whence he wrote his epistle to Titus, whom he had left in Crete with power to ordain teachers, and govern the church in that Island. He afterward proceeded to Cenchrea and Ephesus, where he disputed with the Jews; and having visited the church at Jerusalem, he completed his second apostolical journey, by returning to Antioch in

Syria. But he soon began again his visits to the churches. About this time a new preacher is mentioned.

Herbert. Who is he?

Mrs. L. Apollos, a Jew, born at Alexandria. He was well read in the scriptures, and is spoken of as an eloquent man; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Herbert. What is meant by his knowing only the baptism of John?

Mrs. L. It means that he only understood the christian religion so far as a knowledge of it could be gathered from the preaching of John. John the baptist, you recollect, preached repentance, and exhorted his hearers to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but he did not exhibit *Christ and him crucified* as the apostles did. Apollos had probably never heard the apostles preach, nor associated much with christians. Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who were eminent for their piety, and who had enjoyed the instructive society of the apostle Paul, hearing Apollos preach, were pleased with his zeal, but perceived that he was very defective in christian knowledge. They therefore took him, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. He seems to have received their instructions with true christian meekness, and was afterwards a very useful preacher; for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Catharine. Did Paul continue to travel?

Mrs. L. Yes, though we hear of his being stationary at Ephesus two years. Where was Ephesus?

Herbert. In the western part of Asia Minor.

Mrs. L. Very well. Here was planted one of the

seven churches of Asia. Here we are told, God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons; and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out of them.

Herbert. And were there not some that tried to imitate Paul by casting out evil spirits?

Mrs. L. Yes, but they did not succeed; the man, in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. When this was generally known, fear fell on all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many, who had been accustomed to practice magical arts, were convinced of their folly, and burnt their books.

While Paul remained in Asia, there was a great commotion raised against him by the influence of one Demetrius, a silversmith. There was in Ephesus a celebrated temple dedicated to the goddess Diana; and such was the reverence of the people for this imaginary deity, that they were very desirous to possess little silver models of this temple, or *shrines* as they are called in the history. It was the business of Demetrius to furnish these; and for this purpose he employed a large number of workmen in manufacturing them, which proved a very profitable employment. But Demetrius was sensible that if the gospel prevailed, the people would cease to respect the temple of Diana, and his business would be ruined. He called together the craftsmen, and easily excited them against the apostles, and the city was filled with confusion. And all cried with one voice, for the space of two hours: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. At length the town clerk interfered, and through his influence the people were appea-

sed; for he told them they were in danger of being called to account for the uproar. After the tumult had ceased, Paul called the disciples to him, and embraced them, and then departed for Macedonia.

I shall not enter into all the particulars of the journey; as there is nothing related that seems important to our present purpose till he arrives at Cæsarea, where the Spirit was first poured out on the Gentiles. And here Paul, and those that were with him, were entertained at the house of the same Philip, who baptized the eunuch.

Herbert. Then he lived at Cæsarea.

Mrs. L. So it seems. And Paul here met with prophets, who foretold that he must be bound at Jerusalem.

Emily. That was the time when the prophet took his girdle and bound him. Why should he do that, aunt?

Mrs. L. It was customary with prophets to accompany their predictions with signs to render them more impressive.

Catharine. Did Paul go, when he found trouble awaited him?

Mrs. L. Yes, though his christian friends manifested the greatest anxiety, he broke away from their kindness, telling them that he was ready not only to be bound, but to die also at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. Thus did religion enable the apostle to trust with God the direction of all events; with that God, without whom not a sparrow falleth.

Emily. Aunt, religion must be a great help, to people, even in getting through this world. But I suppose it is not all, who are really pious, that feel so ready to die. Death is an awfully solemn subject to me. I feel as if I could not die. I feel as if I could not stand before God in judgment.

Mrs. L. The subject, my child, will be divested of none of its solemnity, when you draw near to death. But remember you cannot flee from it. No; it is not all, whose sins are forgiven, that can look upon death with composure. If then the righteous scarcely be saved, where will the sinner and the ungodly appear?

When Paul arrived at Jerusalem, his first visit appears to have been to the apostle James, who was with the elders probably assembled for religious worship. Paul then recounted the success that had attended his ministry, and the hearts of the believers in Jerusalem were filled with joy at what God was doing for the Gentiles. They also expressed their willingness that they should receive the gospel in its simplicity, that is, unincumbered with any of the ceremonies of the law. Still they thought as Paul was a Jew, and now among the Jews, it would be best for him to pay some regard to these ceremonies, while he remained in Jerusalem; and he concluded to comply with their advice.

Herbert. Was that right?

Mrs. L. I do not know as there is any thing in the story, from which we can judge.

Catherine. What was the ceremonial law, aunt?

Mrs. L. It related to the ceremonies that were required of the Jews as a nation, such as their purifications, sacrifices, and other things of that nature.

Emily. Then the ten commandments did not belong to it?

Mrs. L. O no, dear. The commandments are called the *moral* law, and they are binding on all men, every where.

But we find the policy that Paul adopted did not avail him any thing; for when he entered the temple, certain

Jews, who were there from Asia, where they had heard him preach to the Gentiles without enforcing the Jewish law, raised at once the cry, This is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place. And all the city was moved, and they thrust Paul out, and would have killed him with their blows; but Lysias the commanding officer of the Roman forces at Jerusalem, took his soldiers, and went to quell the riot. Not understanding the cause of the disturbance, and supposing from the conduct of the people that he must be some criminal, who ought to be in confinement, he loaded him with chains, and ordered him to the castle. This was the tower of Antonio which stood near the temple, and which was always garrisoned by a band of Roman soldiers. On the side where it joined to the porticoes of the temple were stairs reaching to each portico.

As Paul was about to be led into the castle, he requested permission to speak. Lysias was surprised to hear him so readily use the Greek language, in which he spoke to him. And he asked him, Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

Catharine. What about these murderers, aunt?

Mrs. L. There was a noted band of robbers, called sicarii, from the shape of their weapons; Josephus says there were thirty thousand of them. They concealed their poinards under their garments, and privately stabbed their victims. When Lysias saw such a tumult made about Paul, he concluded he could be nothing less than the captain of these robbers. But Paul assured him that he was altogether mistaken as to his character. I am, he says, a man, which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Ci-

licia, a citizen of no mean city; and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. Having obtained liberty to speak, he stood on the stairs before mentioned, and beckoned with his hand to the people. A profound silence followed; and then he began that admirable defence, which you will find in the twenty-second chapter of Acts. You may turn to it and read.

Here you perceive the apostle gives an account of his conversion, and tells how he was sent by Jesus himself to preach to the Gentiles.

Herbert. How did the multitude like that?

Mrs. L. They were enraged. Like madmen they cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, and cried out, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.

Emily. What part did the chief captain take?

Mrs. L. He commanded Paul to be bound, and to be examined by scourging, that he might know the whole truth about the matter. But Paul said to a centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? The chief captain was soon told of this circumstance; and having ascertained from Paul himself that it was so, he was afraid.

Herbert. I do not understand about Paul being a Roman. Was not he a Jew?

Mrs. L. Under the Roman government, sometimes whole cities, and sometimes particular families, or individuals were admitted to the *freedom of the city* as it was termed; that is, they enjoyed all the privileges that were possessed by the citizens of Rome themselves. This was considered so valuable that it was often purchased at a very high price. This was the case with Lysias, the officer that had Paul in custody. With a great sum, said

he, obtained I this freedom. Paul replied, But I was free born. It is supposed by some that the family to which he belonged received the privilege of Roman citizens as a reward for services rendered to the cause of the emperor. It was a law of the Roman empire that no one should be condemned and punished without having been tried. Lysias was alarmed when he found himself on the point of violating this law.

On the next day he summoned a meeting of the Sanhedrim, and brought his prisoner before them. Here Paul declared himself a Pharisee.

Herbert. What effect did this have?

Mrs. L. It had the effect that Paul intended it should have. It brought on a dispute between the Pharisees and Saducees, who composed the council, and thus diverted their attention from him. At length Lysias, learning that a confederacy had been formed to take the life of Paul, sent him off by night under a strong guard to Felix the Roman governor, who lived at Cæsarea, about seventy miles from Jerusalem. He then gave notice to his accusers, that they might go and lay their complaints before the Roman governor. You find a very interesting account of these transactions in the twenty-third chapter of Acts.

Herbert. Did they go to accuse him?

Mrs. L. Yes; five days after, Ananias the high priest accompanied by others, went to Cæsarea, and accused him of heresy, sedition, and profanation of the temple. Paul denied these charges, and gave an account of his faith; yet he was kept in prison, though the governor was convinced of his innocence.

After some days, Drusilla, the wife of Felix, wished to have some knowledge of the religion of Paul. Accord-

ingly he was sent for; and as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, Felix trembled—for he was a wicked man.

Emily. Did he become good, aunt?

Mrs. L. No, dear; we do not read of his ever having been converted. He silenced the voice of conscience, resisted the strivings of the Spirit, and said to Paul, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. Oh, how many perish in the same manner. The convenient season never comes. Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

Two years after this, Felix was recalled from his government; and to please the Jews, he left Paul bound. Felix was succeeded by Festus, who sat in judgment upon Paul. He also wished to ingratiate himself with the Jews, and therefore proposed a new trial; but Paul appealed to the emperor. After this, king Agrippa, with his sister Bernice, came to Cæsarea to make a visit of ceremony, congratulating Festus upon his coming into power.

Herbert. Who was king Agrippa, mother?

Mrs. L. He was son of Herod, who murdered James. He held under the Romans the government of several districts around Judea, and a part of Galilee. He seems also to have had some authority over Judea, for he often interfered in the concerns of the temple.

Festus mentioned the case of Paul to Agrippa, who expressed a desire to hear him himself. The next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, surrounded by the chief captains and principal men of the city. Before this august assembly Paul was brought, and Agrippa told him he was permitted to speak for himself. Here the apostle vindicated himself in the most masterly and

eloquent manner, and king Agrippa at once acknowledged his innocence; but as he had appealed to Cæsar, they thought it proper that he should be sent to Rome.

Herbert. Was not this the time when Agrippa said, Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian?

Mrs. L. Yes, dear; and Paul's reply has been regarded as one of the most impressive pieces of oratory, that can any where be found. I would to God, that not only thou, but also all those that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such I am, *except these bonds*. "What a prodigious effect," says Mr. Horne, "must this striking conclusion, and the sight of the irons held up to enforce it, make upon the minds of the audience!"

At length Paul was delivered into the custody of a centurion, put on board a ship, and sent to Rome. I shall not relate all the particulars of the voyage; but the first time you are at leisure, you may take the reference bible, open the last map, and then reading the twenty-seventh chapter of Acts, trace their course through the Mediterranean, till they were shipwrecked on the island of Melita, now called Malta. Here they remained three months, in which time Paul healed many that were sick, and we cannot doubt that he improved every opportunity to instruct the people in the things of religion. The people, though barbarians, seemed grateful for these favors; for they honored Paul and his companions with many honors; and when they departed, loaded them with such things as were necessary.

Caroline. How did they get away if they had lost their ship?

Mrs. L. They took passage in a ship from Alexandria. They now soon arrived at Rome, when the centurion delivered his prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul

was put under the care of a soldier, as some suppose chained to him, and suffered to live by himself. But in the midst of his afflictions, he did not forget his dear brethren that he had left behind, whom he was not now permitted to visit. Several of his most important and instructive epistles were written here. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things, which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. This closes the bible history; and here, for the present, I will close my instructions.



LECTURE XXV.

Notices of the apostles and books of the New Testament—Conclusion.

EARLY in the week which succeeded the lecture which closed the history of the Acts of the apostles, the children, invited by the soft air of a mild evening at sunset, enjoyed the pleasure of a walk in the garden; and bending their steps towards the summer house, found Mrs. Lyman and aunt Elizabeth with Mosheim and Milnor on church history. With much diffidence, and many apologies for trespassing on their time, the children begged to know more of the apostles, and of the epistles they wrote. You have no need to apologise, said Mrs. Lyman, I was attending to the subject for my own information, and will with pleasure give you the result of my studies.

In the last lecture we left Paul a prisoner at Rome, where he resided two years, in his own hired house. This is the last authentic account we have of this eminent

apostle. The Jews at Jerusalem do not appear to have followed up their prosecution against him, and he was set at liberty. Learned men have gathered from the epistles and some other sources, that after he was set at liberty, he visited the churches in Judea, Asia Minor and Greece, and in about two years returned to Rome where he was again imprisoned, and after being confined about a year, was beheaded. But no particulars are known respecting his imprisonment or death.

Emily. And what became of the twelve apostles?

Mrs. L. Of the labors of eight of them, scarcely any thing is recorded. Of Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Luke, Simon and Matthias, I can give you no further information. James the son of Zebedee, you know, was killed with the sword by order of Herod. James the less, who was called the brother of our Lord, is said to have suffered an equally violent death. Peter is supposed to have been put to death about the same time with Paul. Indeed it is generally supposed that all the twelve shared the same fate, except John. He was banished for a while to the island of Patmos, but was afterwards recalled, and lived to the age of one hundred years; when he died a natural death at Ephesus. An acquaintance with church history will give you many particulars, which do not come within the limits I have fixed for myself, though I am aware they would afford you great gratification.

But I would now call your attention to the different books that compose the new testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are called the four gospels; and were written by the persons, whose names they bear. The book of Acts, was also written by Luke, and has been

supposed originally to have belonged to the same book with his gospel as a second part.

The epistles contained in the new testament are twenty-one in number, and are generally divided into two classes; the epistles of Paul, and the catholic or general epistles; so called because they were not addressed to any particular church, but were designed for the instruction of christians generally. Of these apostolical letters fourteen were written by Paul. They are not placed in the bible in the same order, in which they were composed; but according to the rank of the people, to whom they were addressed. The apostles used the salutation common among the Greeks, but closed with the apostolical benediction.

Herbert. Did they send letters as they do now?

Mrs. L. In the east, to the present time, letters are usually sent unsealed, except when addressed to a person of consequence, when they are put into a valuable purse, covered with clay or wax, and stamped with a signet.

Herbert. But I should like to know exactly when and where they were written, and what they were written for.

Mrs. L. Well, dear; I will try to gratify you; and while doing it, I will endeavor to give you a clearer idea, than I have yet done, of the *chronology* of the new testament.

Herbert. That is, you mean to tell us at what time such and such events took place.

Mrs. L. Yes, but I shall only mention a few of the most important.

From the infancy of our Savior till he entered on his public ministry, nothing is recorded of his life, except his going to Jerusalem with his parents when twelve years

old, and conversing with the doctors in the temple.

To make the subject plainer, here is a table, which will show you at once when the principal events took place.

Year of
our Lord.

30 Christ was baptized by John.

33 Christ is crucified. Fifty days after the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples.

35 Saul is converted. In this on the following year Matthew wrote his gospel. It is supposed he wrote it in Judea, while the church consisted almost entirely of Jewish believers.

38 Paul comes to Jerusalem, and is introduced to the apostles and disciples.

41 Peter preaches the gospel to the Gentiles. Story of Cornelius.

44 James put to death.

50 Paul and Barnabas separate. From this time we hear little of the other apostles, the history being almost wholly confined to the labors and sufferings of Paul.

52 Paul being at Corinth, wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians, to confirm them in the faith of the gospel, from which they were in danger of being turned aside by the persecutions of unbelieving Jews; and also, to excite them to a holy conversation. Keep this in mind when you read this epistle, and it will help you to understand it and render it more interesting.

In the same year he wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, to correct some mistaken opinions, which he had heard were prevailing among them, respecting the coming of the day of judgment.

In this year likewise he wrote to the Galatians, to prove in opposition to the Jewish teachers, that faith in Christ, and not their imperfect obedience to the ceremonial law, was the ground of their salvation.

54 Paul goes to Ephesus, where he remains three years.

56 He writes from Ephesus to the Corinthians to correct some disorders and abuses, which had crept into the church; and to instruct them on some subjects, on which they had requested his advice.

57 After going from Ephesus to Philippi in Macedonia, Paul wrote again to the Corinthians, to vindicate his character against those who had tried to injure his reputation, and to give them further instructions.

Not long after this, Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, whom he had never yet seen. The church at Rome was composed partly of Jews, and partly of Gentiles. The Gentiles were inclined to boast of their philosophy: and the Jews to trust in their relation to Abraham, and in the observance of their law. The apostle labors to convince them that both are equally vain, as a ground of justification; that both Jew and Gentile are guilty before God, and must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved.

58 Paul is seized in the temple at Jerusalem, and sent a prisoner to Felix.

61 He arrives at Rome, where he remains a prisoner two years.

62 He writes his epistle to the Philippians, to encourage them in their obedience, and caution them against false teachers.

He writes his epistle to the Colossians, to show that man's hope of redemption must be founded on Christ, and to caution them against philosophical speculations, and human traditions.

He writes his epistle to the Ephesians, to show them that they were saved by grace, and to encourage them to persevere in their christian course.

He also writes his epistle to Philemon, who lived at Colosse, to entreat him to receive with kindness Onesimus, a slave, who had run away from him, gone to Rome, and had there been converted under the preaching of Paul.

63 Either before he is set at liberty from his confinement at Rome, or immediately after, he writes to the Hebrews, who had embraced christianity, to convince them of the entire insufficiency of the sacrifices of their law to atone for sin, and to persuade them to rely solely on the atoning blood of Christ.

In this or the following year, Luke, being then in Greece, wrote his gospel and the Acts of the apostles. He was led to write his gospel from the fact that there were several imperfect histories of the life of our Lord in circulation.

64 Paul writes his epistle to Titus, a preacher then in the island of Crete, to instruct him concerning his behavior towards certain teachers, who were endeavoring to disturb the peace of the church.

He also writes his first epistle to Timothy, a young preacher at Ephesus; an epistle rich in various instruction on the proper discharge of his duties in the ministry.

Not far from this time Mark wrote his gospel at Rome, for the information of the christians there.

Peter writes two epistles to the Hebrew christians, that were scattered abroad in the countries north of the Mediterranean sea. He gives them a great variety of interesting instructions.

- 65 Paul writes his second epistle to Timothy. It is supposed that Paul wrote this epistle, after he was imprisoned a second time at Rome, and when he was expecting soon to lay down his life.

There is likewise the epistle of Jude, or Judas, one of the twelve apostles, which it is supposed must have been written about this time. It is not known with certainty, to whom it was particularly addressed. Its object is to guard believers against false teachers.

- 66 Paul and Peter, as is supposed, are put to death at Rome.

- 68 John writes three epistles. It is not known to whom the first was addressed. It is calculated to guard christians against certain wrong principles, and sinful practices; and excite them to love and obedience. The two other epistles are addressed to individuals, short, but instructive.

- 95 John is banished to the isle of Patmos, by Domitian, the Roman emperor.

- 97 He is liberated from exile, returns from Ephesus, and writes his gospel, and the revelations. It is supposed that John was led to write his gospel that he might have opportunity to correct certain errors that had been propagated by false teachers; particularly the error of those, who deny the divinity of Christ.

When John was in exile, he was favored with revelation from heaven respecting the future state and prospects of the church. These are contained in the book of revelations; but there is a great deal in this book which we cannot now understand; nor will it be fully understood, till all that is foretold shall be accomplished.

The epistle of James is not mentioned in this table, because the time when it was written, is not known. It was written by James the less, who is called the brother of our Lord. It has been styled one of the most pathetic and instructive epistles in the New Testament. It was written for the purpose of refuting certain errors, that had been introduced among Jewish christians, and contains a summary of those practical duties, which are incumbent on all believers.

The children were abundantly gratified at having so much information presented before them in so small a compass; and Herbert concluded that he should commit the most important dates to memory. Nothing, said he, like having a few *dates* well fixed in the mind, when we study history.

Mrs. Lyman was much pleased to find her household so interested in what I am afraid many idle children will pass over without reading. Many children are willing to read so long as they can be amused; but when they come to real important instruction, they pass it by as too dry for them.

As the party now began to feel the dews of evening, they concluded to remove to the parlor; and as they were sitting there talking over the subject, who should come in but William? Parents and children were equally delighted; and William, after answering all their inquiries about

himself, sat down amid the cheerful circle, and felt himself the happiest of boys. William had been regularly informed of what was doing at the cottage, and one of his first remarks after he was quietly seated, was, Here you have all been studying the new testament, and gained a great deal of information, which I shall not have.

O yes, my son, replied his mother; I intend to have the lectures published, and you shall have a book; and then, if you are disposed, you can make as good improvement as if you had been present.

William seemed highly gratified with the thought, not only that he should have a book himself, but that through the sabbath schools the same information would be extended to thousands of others.

The young, said aunt Elizabeth, at the present day, are favored with the richest of privileges. They have abundant means for becoming acquainted with God, the Creator of all things, and with the duties that grow out of our relation to him and to one another. But my daughters, for all these privileges, an account must be rendered. Your kind aunt has often expressed this idea to you, and I would add my efforts to hers to help you and your cousins to realize, that where much is given, much will also be required. If no misfortune visit us, after a few weeks, William will return to Philadelphia, and you and I shall hasten to meet your papa, and welcome his return. Perhaps this circle will never meet again in this world. How important then that we make such improvement, and adopt such a course of conduct, that whatever be our situation, whether in sickness or in health, joy or sorrow, we may know that peace, of which the scriptures speak as passing all understanding.

How happy would it be, said Mrs. Lyman, could our

dear children take that view of their duties and obligations; which the scriptures require. You know not how much it would add to your enjoyment. Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving. But you know not how real piety would gild every rational enjoyment in this life, and how surely it would fit you for the pure pleasures, that like a broad stream are constantly flowing from the presence of God and the Lamb. I cannot dismiss this subject without urging each one of you to reflect on the goodness of God, in having done so much for beings who constantly transgress his holy law. Our heavenly Father has not only spread out before us the book of nature, exhibiting works, which clearly proclaim the character of God; not only has he given us a written revelation, in which his holy law is made known, but he has sent his Son to die for us. O that the goodness of God might even now lead each one of us to repentance.

THE END.

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